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165

No. 1



N° 1

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 11 October 2005**

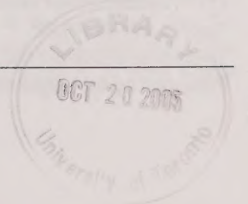
**Mardi 11 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers





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Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
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Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 11 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 11 octobre 2005

*The Second Session of the 38th Parliament of the province of Ontario opened at 4 p.m. for the dispatch of business pursuant to a proclamation of His Honour James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of the province.*

*His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the chamber and took his seat upon the throne.*

**Hon James K. Bartleman (Lieutenant Governor):** May be seated.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** I am commanded by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor to state that he does not see fit to declare the causes of the summoning of the present Legislature of this province until a Speaker of this House shall have been chosen according to law, but tomorrow, at 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon, His Honour will declare the causes of the calling of this Legislature.

*His Honour was then pleased to retire.*

### ELECTION OF SPEAKER

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my duty to call upon you to elect one of your number to preside over your deliberations as Speaker. Therefore, I ask for nominations for the office of Speaker.

**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** Sir, it is my honour to move, seconded by Ms. Wynne, that Mr. Michael Brown, member for the electoral district of Algoma-Manitoulin, do take the chair of the House as Speaker.

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** Does the honourable member for Algoma-Manitoulin accept the nomination?

**Mr. Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin):** Mr. Clerk, I accept.

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** Are there any further nominations?

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I move, seconded by Ms. Scott, that Mr. Ted Arnott, member for the electoral district of Waterloo-Wellington, do take the chair of the House as Speaker.

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** Does the honourable member for Waterloo-Wellington accept the nomination?

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** I accept.

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** Are there any further nominations?

There being no further nominations, I declare the nominations closed.

I would just like to take a few moments to very briefly tell you about the procedure we will follow, because we don't do this very often.

A list of candidates is now being posted in the voting booths. To receive your ballot, please proceed away from the dais toward the main chamber entrance and make your way behind the benches and around that way to the front of the chamber. Members in the opposition side, please use the route on that side. Members on the government side, please use the route on that side.

When you arrive again at the front of the chamber, you will come upon a table where committee clerks will register you and give you a ballot. Please take your ballot to any of the four voting booths that will have been placed on the table, and please print as legibly as possible the name of the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Please then move away from the table and allow room for the members behind you to get to the voting booths.

After all members wishing to vote have done so, the party scrutineers and two table Clerks will leave the chamber to a private room where the ballots will be counted. After I receive a message that the count has been done, I will cause the bells to ring for five minutes to advise members that the result is about to be announced. I will then announce either that a Speaker has been elected or that there is a need for a second ballot.

I would like to announce that the balloting will now begin. Would members direct themselves by either that side or that side to the table here, please.

*The House recessed from 1607 to 1616.*

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** Order, please. Have all members who want to vote voted? We're about the close the ballot boxes. Are there any members who had intended on voting who still have not done so?

**Interjection:** Can we vote again?

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** No, you may not vote a second time.

Seeing no one, the clerks and the scrutineers will now leave the chamber and go and count the ballots.

*The House recessed from 1616 to 1635.*

**The Clerk of the Assembly:** I would like to announce that the honourable member from Algoma-Manitoulin has received a majority of the ballots.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. I want to thank everybody. This is an important day for me, and hopefully for the Parliament. I'm sure this is the last time I will receive a standing ovation, at least across the chamber.

I want to thank some people. I want to thank the member for Essex, Bruce Crozier, and the member for Don Valley West, Kathleen Wynne, for moving and seconding my nomination. I want to thank all the members for their support. I appreciate it. I hope that I can earn—I repeat: earn—your respect over the next while. I will work very hard to do that.

I want to recognize my wife, who is here today with me with my—

*Applause.*

**The Speaker:** Lynn has fought all five election campaigns by my side, usually leading me on the door-to-door, and is a great part of the reason I'm here serving all those folks in Algoma-Manitoulin. I also have my

daughters Jennifer and Amy here with me today. They can do mean door-to-doors and stuff envelopes with the best of them also. I want to just recognize that daughter Mickey is teaching high school in England these days and daughter Paula is at university in Sault Ste. Marie.

I want to thank everyone very much for all their help, and I'm sure that will continue. Let's get on with it.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Energy, Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn until 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 12, 2005.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*The House adjourned at 1639.*









**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. James K. Bartleman  
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. Brown  
Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers  
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffière: Deborah Deller  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Waterloo–Wellington	First Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Premier Vice-Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Finances
Baird, John R. (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk–Brant	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (L)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy government whip / whip adjoint du gouvernement
Bisson, Gilles (ND)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Chief New Democratic Party whip / whip en chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b>	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (L)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b>	Algoma–Manitoulin	Speaker / Président
Brownell, Jim (L)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (L)</b>	St. Paul's	Attorney General / procureur général
Cansfield, Donna H. (L)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de l'Énergie
<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V. (L)</b>	Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	Deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
Churley, Marilyn (ND)	Toronto–Danforth	
<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b>	Eglinton–Lawrence	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph (L)</b>	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Craiton, Kim (L)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b>	Essex	Deputy Speaker, Chair of the committee of the whole House / Vice-Président, Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Delaney, Bob (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	
Dhillon, Vic (L)	Brampton West–Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest–Mississauga	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Sarnia–Lambton	Parliamentary assistant to the Premier / adjointe parlementaire au premier ministre
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b>	Hastings–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Duguid, Brad (L)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (L)</b>	Windsor–St. Clair	Minister of Energy, Chair of Cabinet, Government House Leader / ministre de l'Énergie, président du Conseil des ministres, leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Flaherty, Jim (PC)	Whitby–Ajax	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Oakville	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Travail
Fonseca, Peter (L)	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health Promotion / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Promotion de la santé
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Gravelle, Michael (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Hampton, Howard (ND)	Kenora–Rainy River	Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Hardeman, Emie (PC)	Oxford	
Horwath, Andrea (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	
Hoy, Pat (L)	Chatham–Kent Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Erie–Lincoln	
Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Burlington	
Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	
<b>Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard (L)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation
Klees, Frank (PC)	Oak Ridges	
Kormos, Peter (ND)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	New Democratic Party House leader / leader parlementaire du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Kular, Kuldip (L)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for democratic renewal / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (L)</b>	York Centre / York-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Transports
Leal, Jeff (L)	Peterborough	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade (Small Business) / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce (Petites entreprises)
Levac, Dave (L)	Brant	Chief government whip / whip en chef du gouvernement
Marchese, Rosario (ND)	Trinity–Spadina	
Marsales, Judy (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	
Martel, Shelley (ND)	Nickel Belt	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
Matthews, Deborah (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Mauro, Bill (L)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (L)</b>	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
McMeekin, Ted (L)	Ancaster–Dundas– Flamborough–Aldershot	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government Services / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Services gouvernementaux
McNeely, Phil (L)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (L)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Chief opposition whip / whip en chef de l'opposition
Milloy, John (L)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Mitchell, Carol (L)	Huron–Bruce	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)	Stoney Creek	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and the minister responsible for francophone affairs / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de la Culture et ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Munro, Julia (PC)	York North / York-Nord	
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	Deputy opposition whip / whip adjoint de l'opposition
Oraziotti, David (L)	Sault Ste. Marie	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de l'Éducation
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Parsons, Ernie (L)	Prince Edward–Hastings	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Disabilities) / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires (Personnes handicapées)
Patten, Richard (L)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Peterson, Tim (L)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Tourisme
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (L)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Prue, Michael (ND)	Beaches–East York / Beaches–York-Est	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (L)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Racco, Mario G. (L)	Thornhill	
Ramal, Khalil (L)	London–Fanshawe	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / adjoint parlementaire au ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b>	Timiskaming–Cochrane	Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Northumberland	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal / adjoint parlementaire au ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House leader / leader parlementaire de l'opposition
Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (L)	Guelph–Wellington	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Victoria–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (L)	York West / York-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible for seniors / adjoint parlementaire au ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Smith, Monique M. (L)	Nipissing	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (L)</b>	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Sorbara, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (L)</b>	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Minister of Finance, Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Lanark–Carleton	
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b>	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b>	Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford	Second Deputy Chair of the committee of the whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Tory, John (PC)	Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey	Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition
Van Bommel, Maria (L)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Rural Affairs) / adjointe parlementaire à la ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation (Affaires rurales)
<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (L)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Wilkinson, John (L)	Perth–Middlesex	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment / adjoint parlementaire à la ministre de l'Environnement
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Deputy opposition House leader / leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wong, Tony C. (L)	Markham	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Research and Innovation / adjoint parlementaire au ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education / adjointe parlementaire au ministre de l'Éducation
Yakubski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Zimmer, David (L)	Willowdale	Parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General / adjoint parlementaire au procureur général
Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	



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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: John O'Toole  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco, Andrea Horwath,  
Cameron Jackson, Kuldip Kular, Phil McNeely  
John Milloy, John O'Toole, Jim Wilson  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Phil McNeely  
Toby Barrett, Mike Colle, Pat Hoy, Judy Marsales,  
Phil McNeely, Carol Mitchell, John O'Toole,  
Michael Prue, John Wilkinson  
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Marilyn Churley, Vic Dhillon, Brad Duguid,  
Linda Jeffrey, Jean-Marc Lalonde,  
Deborah Matthews, Jerry J. Ouellette,  
Lou Rinaldi, John Yakabuski  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

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Andrea Horwath, Tim Hudak,  
David Oraziotti, Ernie Parsons,  
Laurie Scott, Monique M. Smith,  
Joseph N. Tascona  
Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

### **Justice Policy / Justice**

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Michael A. Brown, Jim Brownell, Bob Delaney,  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, Frank Klees, Peter Kormos,  
Shafiq Qadri, Mario G. Racco, Elizabeth Witmer  
Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Mario G. Racco  
Donna H. Cansfield, Bob Delaney,  
Ernie Hardeman, Rosario Marchese, Ted McMeekin,  
Norm Miller, Tim Peterson, Mario G. Racco, Mario Sergio  
Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

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Liz Sandals, Norman W. Sterling, David Zimmer  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Tony C. Wong  
Gilles Bisson, Marilyn Churley, Kim Craiton,  
Kuldip Kular, Gerry Martiniuk, Bill Murdoch,  
Khalil Ramal, Maria Van Bommel, Tony C. Wong  
Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

### **Social Policy / Politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Mario G. Racco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Khalil Ramal  
Ted Arnott, Ted Chudleigh, Kim Craiton,  
Peter Fonseca, Jeff Leal, Rosario Marchese,  
Mario G. Racco, Khalil Ramal, Kathleen O. Wynne  
Clerk / Greffière: Anne Stokes

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Chair / Présidente: Caroline Di Cocco  
Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Norm Miller  
Wayne Arthurs, Caroline Di Cocco,  
Kuldip Kular, Norm Miller, Richard Patten,  
Michael Prue, Monique M. Smith,  
Norman W. Sterling, Kathleen O. Wynne

These lists appear in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month. A list arranged by riding appears when space permits.

Ces listes figurent dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et du premier lundi de chaque mois. Par contre, une liste des circonscriptions paraît si l'espace est disponible.

## **CONTENTS**

**Tuesday 11 October 2005**

### **ELECTION OF SPEAKER**

The Clerk of the Assembly.....	1
Mr. Crozier.....	1
Mr. Brown.....	1
Mrs. Munro .....	1
Mr. Arnott .....	1
The Speaker .....	1



No. 2

N° 2

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 12 October 2005

Mercredi 12 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

1180-2987



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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 12 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 12 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1430.*

*His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the chamber and took his seat upon the throne.*

**Hon. James K. Bartleman (Lieutenant Governor):** Pray be seated.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfill the important duties thus assigned to me.

If, in the performance of those duties, I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me and not to the assembly, whose servant I am and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and country, hereby claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to your person at all reasonable times and that their proceedings may receive from you the most favourable consideration.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Speaker, I am commanded by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of the assembly to Her Majesty's person and government and, not doubting that the proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temperance and prudence, he grants and upon all occasions will recognize and allow the constitutional privileges.

I am commanded also to assure you that the assembly shall have ready access to His Honour upon all suitable occasions and that their proceedings, as well as your words and actions, will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

*His Honour the Lieutenant Governor was pleased to open the session by reading the speech from the throne.*

### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

#### DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

**Hon. James K. Bartleman (Lieutenant Governor):** Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislative Assembly, people of Ontario:

The speech from the throne is one of our best-known parliamentary conventions.

And yet, with your indulgence, I begin today in an unconventional way: with a personal expression of gratitude to the many Ontarians who supported and continue to support my ongoing efforts to champion literacy and mental health among native youth in Ontario's north.

Ontarians donated more than 1.2 million books in a book campaign, now over, for native communities. They supported the twinning of 100 native schools with public and Catholic schools. And this past summer, they supported the launching of five literacy and mental wellness camps in remote areas of the province.

I intend to push ahead with more summer camps in the coming year, which, I hope, should cut into the shocking number of suicides among native children.

A personal thank you, merci and meegwetch to everybody who participated in this campaign.

As Ontarians hail from every corner of the world, Ontarians are affected, and Ontarians respond, when tragedy strikes around the world.

Your government has pledged to work with the federal government in aiding the victims of this past weekend's massive earthquake in South Asia, and urges us all to consider donating to relief and rebuilding efforts to help the millions left homeless.

I should like to ask everyone to pause now for a moment of silence, out of respect for the thousands who have been lost.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

**Hon. Mr. Bartleman:** This is the Year of the Veteran, in honour of the men and women who have sacrificed their youth, or made the ultimate sacrifice, so we could live in peace and freedom.

Your government and Ontario drivers show their respect and gratitude with a special veterans' licence plate that bears the poppy.

This assembly is marking the service and sacrifices of our veterans with a new Veterans' Memorial—the first memorial to be built on the actual grounds of the Legislature in 65 years.

Today, we are privileged to be joined by Major-General Richard Rohmer, a veteran of the Second World War, who served with the Royal Canadian Air Force as a fighter-reconnaissance pilot from 1942 to 1945 and took part in the D-Day operation.

*Applause.*

1440

**Hon. Mr. Bartleman:** By standing, General Rohmer exemplified and personified the veterans.

On behalf of 12 million Ontarians, I'd like to express the support and appreciation of the government and the people.

I want to extend my personal best wishes to former Speaker Alvin Curling, who has served this province well

and is about to serve his country equally well in a diplomatic role.

I know you join me in finding it slightly ironic that someone who has generated so much warmth should be leaving us for the Dominican Republic now, when winter is fast approaching.

I also congratulate and welcome the new Speaker of this assembly, a man who possesses both good cheer and an exemplary record of public service.

The chair is in good hands.

On a more sombre note, since I last delivered a throne speech in this assembly, Ontario has lost 11 former MPPs: Joseph "Gaston" Demers, Dominic Agostino, Gordon Mills, Joseph Earl McEwen, John L. Brown, Robert Boyer, Joseph Albert Belanger, Donald William Ewen, Gordon E. Smith, Thomas Alfred Wardle and Allister Johnston.

For most of us gathered here today, it is the name Dominic Agostino that triggers the most vivid memories.

We remember his passion for this place and this province.

But a deep dedication to Ontarians was displayed by each of these individuals, each in his turn, and we honour them all today.

While this is a speech from the throne, it is, first and foremost, a speech for the people of Ontario: the millions of Ontarians who get up and work hard every day to reach higher, to build a better life for themselves and their children and a brighter future for their province and their country.

Ce discours leur est destiné.

Et c'est afin d'œuvrer dans leur intérêt que nous sommes réunis en cette nouvelle législature.

This speech belongs to them.

And we gather for this session of Parliament to work on their behalf.

We do this work at the beginning of the 21st century, a time of tremendous challenges and limitless opportunities.

This speech is about strengthening Ontario's economic advantage, so we can meet these challenges and seize these opportunities.

We know Ontario can compete and win in the modern world.

Our foundation is strong, our people industrious and ingenious.

Ours is a proud tradition.

And ours is a bright future.

And yet, our fate is influenced by countless events beyond our borders.

We belong to a very complex, truly global economy—an economy subject to events as profound as war and peace, as volatile as international politics and commerce, as unpredictable as human nature and even nature itself.

No single government or institution can control the path of the world economy.

But your government is working hard to ensure Ontarians can take on the world.

It understands that everything—from the ability of our businesses to compete to our capacity to fund a caring society to the opportunities available to our children—depends on Ontario's prosperity.

C'est pourquoi le gouvernement travaille avec les Ontariennes et Ontariens à renforcer l'avantage économique de la province, c'est-à-dire à rehausser le niveau d'instruction et les compétences de notre population, à améliorer la santé publique, à stimuler l'innovation et à miser sur notre diversité, et à veiller à ce que les éléments fondamentaux soient en place.

So, your government is working with Ontarians to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage by strengthening the education and skills of our people, by improving the health of our people, by fostering innovation and leveraging our diversity and by ensuring we get the fundamentals right.

For two years now, Ontarians have worked together to achieve a remarkable turnaround in each of these areas.

We're making progress.

Now is the time to accelerate that progress.

The brains and know-how of a highly skilled workforce are the economic edge of the 21st century.

So, when we strengthen the education and skills of our people, we strengthen Ontario's economic advantage.

Your government's plan for education and skills is focused on success, at each crucial stage of the learning curve, by ensuring that:

—Young children are ready to learn when they first arrive in school;

—School children can read, write and do math at a high level by age 12;

—Young people keep learning until at least age 18; and

—That they have opportunities to learn beyond high school in a university, college, apprenticeship or skills program that is of the highest quality.

This plan begins with Best Start, which will make quality child care and early learning opportunities more affordable for thousands of working families.

It will fund 25,000 new child care spaces and assistance for thousands of low- and middle-income families.

It is a milestone—the product of years of hard work by people who have devoted their lives to our youngest Ontarians.

We recognize them by acknowledging, in our presence today, someone who epitomizes their passion, persistence and pursuit of excellence: the Honourable Margaret McCain.

Best Start will ensure our children arrive, on the first day of school, prepared to learn.

Your government's investments in smaller class sizes will ensure their chance to learn isn't lost in a crowd.

Twenty-one hundred schools now have smaller class sizes in junior kindergarten to grade 3—because of the hiring of 2,400 new teachers.



These are crucial years, when our children are developing the foundation—in reading, writing and math—fundamental to the skills needed in the 21st century.

So your government will continue to reduce class sizes, driving toward the goal of having our youngest learners in classes of 20 students or less by 2007-08.

And parents will be able to access up-to-date information on class sizes in their school, and across Ontario, through a new class size Web site.

Ontario wants our children to read, write and do math at a high level by age 12—another critical point in a child's progress, when students are developing their skills and beginning to ponder their future.

So your government has hired hundreds of specialist teachers in literacy and numeracy, trained thousands more teachers in the latest techniques of teaching reading and math and invested in additional resources for students, including new textbooks.

For the first time, new student achievement officers are working with our schools, making sure our students have what they need to succeed, and that the approaches that are working in some schools are being shared with all schools.

This sharing of best practices—this drive to student success—is fostered by a new Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, which brings together many of the best and brightest educators in our province.

Your government acknowledges the dedication of all our partners in education—teachers, principals, education workers and trustees—by now recognizing, here in this chamber, their colleagues Jim Spyropoulos, principal of Newtonbrook Secondary School, where they are striving to improve student achievement, and Avis Glaze, the chief student achievement officer of the secretariat.

Le gouvernement tient à remercier les collectivités qui soutiennent nos écoles, les parents qui participent aux projets et supervisent les devoirs à la maison et, d'abord et surtout, les élèves qui s'efforcent de réussir, car c'est ensemble que nous avançons.

Your government wishes to thank the communities who support our schools, the parents who help with the projects and the homework and, most of all, the students who are striving to succeed, because together, we are making progress.

The percentage of students meeting the provincial standard in reading, writing and math went up 8% last year, and your government looks forward to the next set of results.

We need to work together to accelerate that progress, to strive toward the ambitious goal of at least 75% of our children reading, writing and doing math at a high level by age 12.

And we know that we can continue to work together, because we have achieved peace and stability for students by reaching unprecedented four-year agreements with our teaching partners. For the first time, the Ontario government will build a genuine partnership with Ontario's teachers, school boards, principals, trustees, students, parents and education support workers.

The government will also work to expand that partnership into the general community, so that the public, non-profits and businesses will find it easier to play an essential supporting role for student success.

Just as the teen years are the link between childhood and adulthood, high school can mark a critical turning point in the life of an Ontarian.

**1450**

This is when your son or daughter decides whether to reach higher, or drop out.

No decision is more critical to his or her future, no moment more important to Ontario's future prosperity.

And too many young Ontarians are making the wrong choice: nearly one third of them are dropping out.

So no initiative is more essential to Ontario's economic advantage than your government's plan to ensure our young people keep learning in a classroom, apprenticeship or workplace training program until at least age 18.

Your government will introduce legislation that would make learning to age 18 mandatory in Ontario.

Ontario won't give up on its youth.

Instead, your government will challenge and engage young Ontarians by making learning more relevant to them.

Your government will introduce an alternative secondary school diploma, one that gives prominence to the ability to develop a skill or trade.

This diploma will set a different standard, not a lower one.

The hiring of 1,300 new high school teachers will ensure each school has at least one student success teacher devoted to ensuring students have the support, programs and experience they need to be successful.

There will be improved resources for programs that help students who have left school return to a classroom, apprenticeship or skills program.

And investments will be made in special projects to help students who are struggling to succeed, or need extra help to learn English as a second language.

Nous continuerons à répondre aux défis particuliers qui se posent aux conseils scolaires de langue française de l'Ontario en constituant un groupe de travail permanent chargé de promouvoir la culture de langue française, de freiner l'assimilation et de contribuer à retenir nos élèves francophones dans leurs écoles.

We will continue to address the unique challenges faced by Ontario's French-language school boards by forming a permanent francophone education task force to promote French culture, reduce assimilation and help retain our francophone students.

Enabling our students to step up, instead of drop out, will require the combined efforts of Ontarians from all walks of life: students, educators, parents and, in particular, employers.

To dramatically increase the number of co-op and job placement opportunities for our young people, your government will reach out to Ontario business, big and small.

Your government will set clear benchmarks for increasing the percentage of high school students who achieve their diploma.

Students who continue to climb the ladder of opportunity deserve the best Ontario has to offer.

That's why the Reaching Higher plan will invest \$6.2 billion more in post-secondary education and training over the next five years.

It is one of the most ambitious economic initiatives ever in our province.

And it is proof of Ontario's determination to strengthen our economic advantage by strengthening the education and skills of our people.

It has three goals: higher quality, greater accessibility and more accountability.

"Quality" means improving the experience for students, increasing graduation rates and expanding research.

"Accessibility" means ensuring no qualified student is denied a higher education because of his or her financial resources.

"Accountability" means showing the public that new investments are achieving meaningful results.

Where you start out in life should not determine how high you can reach.

Already, 135,000 low- and middle-income families are getting assistance they would not have received before Reaching Higher was announced.

This year, 32,000 first- and second-year students are receiving grants—instead of loans—the first time this has happened in over a decade.

Ontario's progress has long been fuelled by each generation's desire to see the next generation go farther.

In recognition of this, your government will establish the first-generation plan, designed to help those students striving to become the first in their family to seek a post-secondary education.

It will launch initiatives designed to improve access for people who have been under-represented in higher learning, including Ontarians with disabilities, aboriginal peoples and francophones.

Your government will continue to work to expand the number of apprenticeships available in the skilled trades—this year, next year and the year after that—because in today's economy, knowledge plus skills equals prosperity.

In the coming year, your government will work with its partners to implement the Reaching Higher plan in a way that delivers quality, accessibility and accountability.

Ontarians value our system of universal, publicly funded health care, provided on the basis of the treatment you need, not how wealthy you happen to be.

Medicare reflects two of our most timeless values: fairness and compassion.

But in the 21st century, medicare is also an important part of Ontario's economic advantage.

Le régime d'assurance-santé nous aide à attirer investissements et emplois. En effet, les entreprises qui

décident de s'implanter en Ontario s'épargnent les frais des coûteux régimes d'assurance pour employés, tels que ceux qui ont cours aux États-Unis.

Et le fait que d'excellents soins de santé soient offerts à tous contribue à maintenir notre population en santé, avec l'accroissement de productivité correspondant.

Notre régime d'assurance-santé nous confère ainsi un double avantage concurrentiel : des coûts moindres et une productivité accrue.

Medicare helps us attract investment and jobs: Employers who choose Ontario do not have to fund expensive, US-style health insurance for their employees.

And excellent health care, available to all, keeps our people healthy, and that makes our workforce more productive.

So medicare provides us with a two-sided competitive edge: lower costs and higher productivity.

To sharpen that edge, we must improve the level of care for patients, and ensure medicare is strong enough to care for Ontarians for generations to come.

This is why your government is reducing wait times for key medical procedures by providing:

- 8% more CT scans;
- 11% more cancer surgeries;
- 16% more cataract surgeries;
- 17% more cardiac procedures;
- 28% more hip and knee replacements; and
- 42% more MRI scans.

These represent some of the largest increases ever.

Your government will work with medical experts to spell out the appropriate length of wait times for these procedures, how long the wait really is, and just how much progress is being made when it comes to reducing wait times.

It will launch a new integrated information system and Web site that empowers patients to see for themselves how long wait times are at their local hospital, and whether a procedure is available sooner at another hospital.

This is unprecedented transparency, accountability and care.

Sixty-nine new family health teams—that will provide improved family care for more than one million Ontarians—are taking shape across the province. Over the next year, the government will announce 80 more teams.

These are teams of nurses, nurse practitioners, dietitians, pharmacists, mental health workers and doctors—doctors who can see 52% more patients because they're working as part of a team.

To further remedy the doctor shortage that affects so many Ontario communities, your government is expanding the number of medical school spaces by 23% while doubling the number of spaces available to international medical graduates and opening the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine, the province's first new medical school in 30 years.

There are 3,000 new jobs for nurses, and the number of nurses working full-time, according to the College of



Nurses of Ontario, has gone up from 51% to 59% over the past two years.

This means better care, more consistent care, for patients. The government will continue to work with health care providers and nurses to achieve the goal of having 8,000 new nursing positions and 70% full-time employment.

Nurse Julie Longhurst is a recent graduate from Ontario who has accepted a full-time position at Toronto East General Hospital. She will work in the family birthing unit and help ensure happy, healthy beginnings for Ontario families.

*Applause.*

**1500**

By acknowledging Nurse Longhurst, we recognize all the hard-working men and women who care for Ontario patients.

With a 10% increase in funding for long-term care, your government is building a system worthy of the seniors who built this province. New legislation for long-term care will be introduced to build upon this investment.

Your government is also empowering communities by establishing 14 local health integration networks that will plan local health care. Your government will introduce legislation that, if passed, will fund the delivery of that care.

The adage about an ounce of prevention being worth a pound of cure has taken on new meaning in the 21st century: Health care costs are rising, the population is aging and growing, and the need to keep taxation levels competitive has never been greater. That is why our plan to strengthen health care places great emphasis on keeping people healthy.

For the first time in our history, your government has a Minister of Health Promotion, who is leading an ambitious agenda to promote healthy and active living in Ontario.

This agenda includes: legislation making enclosed public places and workplaces smoke-free, the stupid.ca campaign to discourage young people from smoking, the Active 2010 plan, designed to promote physical activity, and the province taking on a larger share of the costs of public health.

Having removed junk food from elementary school vending machines, Ontario will now require grade schools to provide at least 20 minutes of daily physical activity each school day.

Your government is determined to protect Ontarians' health by cleaning up the air they breathe and protecting the water they drink.

It will replace coal-fired electricity generation with cleaner forms of energy, with the last coal-fired plant slated to close in early 2009.

It will protect drinking water by introducing legislation, as recommended by the Walkerton inquiry, that would protect water at its source.

It will improve the environmental assessment process by making it more transparent and efficient.

And because a healthy lifestyle includes activity in the great outdoors, it will introduce legislation that will ensure our precious provincial parks are protected forever, while pursuing our strategy to map and sign 64,000 kilometres of Ontario trails.

To symbolize the value we place on our natural environment ... and the power of people to make a positive difference, your government will be creating a new park in the Rouge Valley—the Bob Hunter Memorial Park.

To his children and his wife Bobbi, we say: Bob's passionate defence of the environment blazed a trail and left a legacy. It will not be forgotten.

To fully develop our economic advantage, Ontario must be first in the innovation race.

The first to discover new ideas.

The first to turn them into new products and services.

And the first to market those products and services to the world, so they generate jobs and prosperity for our people.

The Premier has established two goals for the new Ministry of Research and Innovation he is leading: to support the process of innovation and to create a culture of innovation.

He has said he wants innovation to be more than possible in Ontario.

He wants it to be inevitable.

By aligning initiatives that had previously been spread across nine ministries, and working to develop new ones, your government is ensuring that, for the first time, Ontario will have a clear plan for research and innovation.

A new Ontario Research and Innovation Council will provide advice to help ensure more strategic investments follow.

Your government has already invested in the MARS Discovery District, to help support the discovery, funding and marketing of new ideas, all in the same location.

Your government recognizes that key sectors of the Ontario economy must innovate if they are to compete with the world and employ our people, well into this new century.

The Ontario automotive investment strategy has been tremendously successful in attracting leading-edge investment—investment in the next generation of jobs.

Agreements with Ford, GM, Toyota and Navistar have leveraged more than \$4.5 billion worth of investment in Ontario—and this includes the first greenfield plant in Canada in over a decade, to be built by Toyota in Woodstock.

Your government is continuing discussions with several companies to build on this success.

Our \$30-billion agri-food industry is essential to our economy—especially in rural Ontario.

That is why your government moved quickly to deliver assistance to cattle farmers hurt by the US ban on Canadian beef ... why it continues to act on concerns regarding the Canadian agricultural income stabilization program ... and why it is requiring an average of 5% ethanol in all gasoline sold in Ontario by January 2007,



and supporting the construction of ethanol plants here in Ontario: to create new markets for our farmers, clean up our air and provide a hedge against volatile gasoline prices.

Beginning with the Premier's agri-food summit, your government is working with leaders in this sector to develop a common vision for the future.

The focus is on three priorities:

—Innovation: Your government will support research and development that helps create new markets and ways of doing business in agri-food.

—Marketing Ontario food: Your government will work with the industry to develop a new branding and marketing strategy.

—Farm income: Ontario is working with the federal government to improve our system of safety nets.

The forestry sector that is so important to Ontario's economy, and northern Ontario in particular, faces enormous challenges.

Globalization of this industry is causing profound change worldwide, including consolidation and job loss.

Your government is responding with more than \$680 million in support—funding that will help this sector invest in the innovative transformation required to compete in today's market.

To further enhance the northern economy, the government is supporting economic development through grow bond loans, supporting job creation through the northern Ontario heritage fund, attracting anchor investments through the GO North strategy, and investing in northern infrastructure.

To share in Ontario's economic prosperity, your government is working actively on a number of initiatives to close the socio-economic gap between aboriginal peoples and other Ontario citizens. We have embarked upon a new approach to aboriginal peoples and we are developing proposals to enable aboriginal peoples to share fairly in the benefits of natural resource development.

Ontario will continue to champion international trade that is open—and fair.

Unfortunately, our competitors do not always play by the rules.

Massive agricultural subsidies in Europe and the US are hurting our farmers and making it difficult for them to compete.

Our competitors are ignoring trade rulings on softwood lumber and slapping tariffs on our products.

And our auto sector is hampered by trade policies that make it difficult for Ontario-made cars to be sold in markets overseas, even though automakers in those markets have broad access to Ontario's market.

We know our people and products can compete with the world and win—as long as the playing field is level and the same rules apply to everyone.

Your government strongly urges the federal government to take action to ensure fairness—and to heed today's lessons when negotiating tomorrow's trade agreements.

Our diversity is a tremendous source of strength.

Our people come from some 200 countries.

We speak more than 130 languages, practise every faith and embrace every culture.

Our diversity fosters a wonderful view of the world, where there is no "us" and "them": there is only us.

But it is also an economic advantage because it enables us to do business with the world.

We understand every market, have ties to every investment community and can communicate with any customer.

We can leverage our diversity into investment and jobs, but only if we continue to attract the best and the brightest from around the world, and provide them with the opportunity to make the best and brightest contribution to Ontario.

Our desire to truly welcome newcomers to Ontario has stood at the forefront of the Premier's campaign to narrow the \$23-billion gap.

#### 1510

That is, of course, the gap between what Ontarians contribute to the federal government and what they receive back in spending.

It's a gap that was reflected by the federal government spending, on average, \$3,000 more on the settlement and integration of each newcomer in Quebec than in Ontario.

Ontario fought for and received a commitment from the Prime Minister of Canada to eliminate this disparity.

Your government recognizes that gaining language skills is the foundation of success for newcomers. That is why English as a second language will be the main focus of the newly strengthened Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

Increased funding will mean English-as-a-second-language training for an additional 30,000 newcomers to Ontario.

Your government will also work with partners in education to improve quality in language training.

Your government will also build on the success of bridge training programs that help newcomers gain skills and experience essential to practise in Ontario.

Your government is determined to break down the barriers that can prevent new Canadians from reaching their full potential.

It will ensure timely access to professions and trades for qualified professionals trained outside of Canada by ensuring regulatory bodies create a fair and transparent registration and appeals process.

Your government will launch the first Ontario immigration portal on the Internet, providing potential newcomers with up-to-the-minute information on Ontario's communities, labour markets, skills accreditation and other important information to successfully start their new life here.

It's important to tell Ontario's diversity story to the world by reaching out to rapidly growing economic markets.

This November, the Premier will lead an Ontario trade and investment mission to Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing and Hong Kong.

And Ontario will open international marketing offices in Tokyo, London, New Delhi and Los Angeles by 2006, located within existing Canadian offices such as consulates, to take advantage of cost savings and shared opportunities to promote Ontario's trade interests.

We strengthen Ontario's economic advantage when we get the fundamentals right—modern infrastructure, a reliable energy supply, efficient and effective public services, and strong partnerships with the private sector and other governments.

Your government has launched a five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan called ReNew Ontario.

This features new and improved roads, major hospital projects, water system repair, and sustained investment in public transit, including five-year funding for GO Transit capital and the Toronto Transit Commission, and funding for the Ottawa O-Train.

While we must expand our outreach to emerging economies, our biggest trading partner remains the United States.

Your government is investing in major improvements to border gateways in Niagara Falls and Sarnia.

And it has appointed Michael Kergin, the respected former Canadian ambassador to the United States, to accelerate dramatic improvements in Windsor, including a new border crossing.

Mr. Kergin is with us today, and when we acknowledge him, we acknowledge all the men and women who are working so hard to modernize Ontario's infrastructure.

A reliable supply of clean energy at a reasonable cost is absolutely essential to Ontario's prosperity.

We have just 15 years to refurbish, rebuild or replace 25,000 megawatts of electricity supply.

In just two years, your government has brought more than 2,200 megawatts on-line. It has advanced new generation projects that will provide us with another 9,000 megawatts over the next five years—enough power for 4.1 million homes.

And it is on target to meet Ontario's goal of renewable generation accounting for 5% of our electricity capacity by 2007.

But there is much more to be done.

To ensure that the necessary long-term planning takes place, your government has created the new Ontario Power Authority, and it will act on the best, unvarnished advice on what must be done next.

Commodity prices for new generation will no longer be subsidized or capped. Your government has taken the politics out of electricity pricing. The Ontario Energy Board now sets residential prices.

But your government is taking action to ensure Ontario's prices remain competitive—by achieving a diverse mix of supply, a reliable transmission grid and stability in the energy sector.

It will also give Ontarians the tools they need to better manage their costs, including the installation of smart meters in 800,000 homes and businesses by 2007, and every home and business by 2010.

Smart meters—which tell you what you're paying for electricity at each time during the day—will allow consumers to gear their energy use to when the price is lower.

Your government will introduce new measures—and new legislation—to encourage energy conservation.

We are making these changes in a way that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 megatonnes. This means cleaner air and healthier Ontarians. It represents 10% of Canada's total Kyoto goal. We expect that the federal government will recognize this contribution in its Kyoto plan.

Government itself must ensure its own house is in order, that it is delivering a high level of service and practising fiscal discipline.

More than half of the ministries within your government have had their operating budgets flatlined, declining or held to increases less than the rate of inflation.

The \$5.6-billion deficit has been reduced to \$1.6 billion.

This is due to the hard work of Ontarians. It is a source of confidence. It is not a licence to lose focus. Hard-working taxpayers deserve a high level of service.

Le gouvernement maintient le cap sur son objectif, qui est d'assurer l'amélioration continue de la qualité des services à la population.

Il s'agit là d'un engagement partagé avec une fonction publique véritablement hors du commun, qui fait preuve chaque jour d'une éthique du travail exemplaire et d'un professionnalisme indéfectible.

Your government remains focused on ensuring an ever-improving quality of service to Ontarians.

This commitment is shared by a public service that is truly second to none, one that demonstrates each day an exemplary work ethic and unfaltering professionalism.

Working with them, your government will unveil what is believed to be the first money-back public service guarantee in North America.

Later this year, Ontarians who fill out birth certificate applications on-line will get their certificate within 15 days—or they will get their money back.

Your government looks forward to announcing other types of service that will be delivered with a money-back guarantee.

The Drive Clean program includes newer vehicles that are passing emission tests more than 99% of the time.

Drive Clean will be reformed to end this waste of Ontarians' time and money.

Your government's initiatives have successfully brought auto insurance rates down by an average 11% decrease since it assumed office.

Your government will continue to implement the most sweeping and comprehensive changes to Ontario's consumer protection laws in more than 30 years, including stronger enforcement and higher fines.

Your government will continue to work with the private sector, including our small and medium-sized businesses, which account for half the jobs in Ontario and 99% of the firms.



A new on-line regulatory registry is the first in a series of steps that will make it easier for small businesses to operate. The new Small Business Agency will continue reducing the paperwork and regulatory burden small businesses face when they interact with government.

A strong democracy is the basis of the work we do together. Your government will strengthen our democratic institutions by consulting Ontarians on electoral and political finance reform.

1520

Your government will continue to seek effective partnerships with other levels of government.

It will continue to campaign to narrow the \$23-billion gap.

Ontarians are proud Canadians, who are willing to play our traditional leadership role within Confederation.

But we want the gap narrowed, because it compromises our ability to invest in our future prosperity by investing in the education and health of Ontarians.

A strong Ontario means a strong Canada.

At the same time, your government continues to work with the federal government on Ontarians' priorities.

For example, your government will be implementing a new housing agreement that will provide 15,000 affordable units and up to 5,000 housing allowances for low-income households, including people recovering from mental illness, victims of domestic violence and people in remote communities.

It is forming strong partnerships, as well, with our municipalities.

Your government was the first to provide gas tax funding for Ontario public transit.

The proof is now on the streets and rails of Ontario: There are new streetcars, new buses and new levels of service.

Keeping our people moving is important. Keeping them safe is even more important.

Your government will work with our municipal partners to ensure there are 1,000 more police officers on the street by 2007.

The first Canadian province to require hospitals to report gunshot wounds to the police will continue to urge the federal government to toughen sentences for gun crimes.

And your government will expand programs for youth, so there are positive alternatives to guns and gangs and violence.

Ontario will be tough on crime—and tough on the causes of crime.

Strengthening Ontario's economic advantage must include measures to strengthen Ontario's largest economic engine.

Your government will work with municipal leaders to establish the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority.

And it will work with transit authorities to develop a single electronic ticket, good for a trip across the GTA.

A new City of Toronto Act will, if passed, treat Canada's largest city as a mature level of government.

And legislation will be proposed to treat all of our municipal partners with the respect they deserve.

This is your government's plan to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage by strengthening the education and skills of our people, by improving the health of our people, by fostering innovation and leveraging our diversity, and by ensuring we get the fundamentals right.

It is the right plan for Ontario at the right time. It is a plan that prepares Ontarians to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st century.

Grace à ce plan, l'Ontario marque et marquera des progrès tangibles.

C'est aux Ontariennes et Ontariens que revient le mérite de ces progrès.

Les retombées positives constatées jusqu'à présent, qu'il s'agisse des résultats supérieurs aux tests scolaires, de la réduction des temps d'attente dans nos hôpitaux ou encore de la création de 193 000 emplois, témoignent du fait que les Ontariennes et Ontariens travaillent fort, qu'ils travaillent bien et qu'ils travaillent en concertation.

Under this plan, Ontario is making progress.

The credit for this progress belongs to Ontarians.

The positive results we have seen so far—from higher test scores in our schools to shorter wait times in our hospitals to 193,000 new jobs—are the product of Ontarians working hard, working well and working together.

Now is the time to accelerate this progress.

Now is the time to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage.

And this plan is how we will fulfill the aspirations of Ontarians: to build a better life for our children, and our children's children, to build a prosperous Ontario and a stronger Canada.

God save the Queen. God bless Canada.

*Singing of "O Canada."*

*His Honour was then pleased to retire.*

*Prayers.*

**The Speaker:** I beg to inform the House that to prevent mistakes, I've obtained a copy of the speech from the throne, which I will now read.

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker:** Dispensed.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### AN ACT TO PERPETUATE AN ANCIENT PARLIAMENTARY RIGHT LOI VISANT À PERPÉTUER UN ANCIEN DROIT PARLEMENTAIRE

Mr. McGuinty moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 1, An Act to perpetuate an Ancient Parliamentary Right / Projet de loi 1, Loi visant à perpétuer un ancien droit parlementaire.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.



**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I rise today to introduce our first bill, An Act to perpetuate an Ancient Parliamentary Right. As a matter of parliamentary tradition, the first bill introduced in the Legislature discusses an initiative that has not been mentioned in the speech from the throne. This bill is purely symbolic. This is a powerful symbol, one through which we, as members, both assert our independence from the crown and affirm our right to address the priorities of the Legislature before we attend to other business. Our government upholds this important tradition and we recognize this symbol of the rights of all members of the chamber. I know that all members of the House will join me in reconfirming the accountability of this government and its cabinet by supporting the Bill 1 tradition.

### MOTIONS

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House**

**Leader):** I move that the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor to this House be taken into consideration on Thursday, October 13, 2005.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I believe we have unanimous consent for this. I move that, notwithstanding standing orders 8(a) and 96(a), the House shall not meet to consider private members' public business on the morning of Thursday, October 13, 2005.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Speaker:** Shall the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 of the clock tomorrow afternoon.

*The House adjourned at 1533.*

## CONTENTS

**Wednesday 12 October 2005**

### **SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

The Lieutenant Governor .....	3
-------------------------------	---

### **FIRST READINGS**

#### **An Act to perpetuate an Ancient Parliamentary Right, Bill 1,**

<i>Mr. McGuinty</i>	
Agreed to .....	10
Mr. McGuinty .....	11

### **MOTIONS**

#### **Throne speech debate**

Mr. Bradley .....	11
Agreed to .....	11

#### **Private members' public business**

Mr. Bradley .....	11
Agreed to .....	11

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Mercredi 12 octobre 2005**

### **DISCOURS DU TRÔNE**

Le lieutenant-gouverneur .....	3
--------------------------------	---

### **PREMIÈRE LECTURE**

#### **Loi visant à perpétuer un ancien droit parlementaire, projet de loi 1,**

<i>M. McGuinty</i>	
Adoptée .....	10



No. 3

N° 3

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 13 October 2005

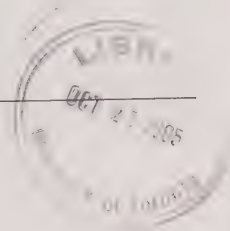
Jeudi 13 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers





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Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 13 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 13 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### TORNADOES IN WATERLOO–WELLINGTON

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member for Waterloo–Wellington.

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to congratulate you on your election.

Now that the House has finally resumed, I wish to inform members of the natural disaster that occurred in Waterloo–Wellington on August 19. On that day, severe weather in southern Ontario created two devastating tornadoes that touched down in my riding. As written in the Guelph Mercury, "Both funnels whipped up winds of 180 to 240 kilometres per hour, cutting trees in half, downing power lines, tossing cars into ditches and damaging homes and barns."

After the tornadoes struck, I returned home as soon as possible to pitch in and help. Working with municipal and emergency response officials, I urged the Minister of Community Safety and the Minister of Municipal Affairs to tour our devastated communities in the townships of Centre Wellington and Mapleton. I'm pleased that they did. I also met with senior Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff to push for financial support from the province under the Ontario disaster relief assistance program, and I personally spoke with the Premier on September 9 to seek his intervention and appropriate response.

Yesterday, the government's throne speech referred to the response of Ontarians "when tragedy strikes around the world." The August 19 tornadoes happened right here at home. Three weeks ago, the townships of Centre Wellington and Mapleton and the GRCA submitted their detailed requests for financial assistance to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. We are still awaiting a reply.

I call upon the government to complete its review of our economic losses and provide a firm financial commitment to the tornado victims in Waterloo–Wellington.

#### FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The member for Brampton Centre.

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations on your election.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Fire Prevention Week in Ontario. This year's theme is Use Candles with Care.

Fire Prevention Week is a time to take stock of the overwhelming losses incurred by fires and the solutions that could prevent such losses. In 2001, a total of 55,323 fires, 338 deaths, 2,310 injuries and almost \$1.5 million in property losses were reported. Both the loss of life and the loss of property are preventable.

Last session, I introduced a private member's bill to make fire sprinklers mandatory in new detached, semi-detached and row houses. This past summer I traveled the province, speaking to municipal officials and fire-fighters, asking them how I can improve the bill. Later today I will introduce an improved piece of legislation that aims to make fire sprinklers mandatory in the construction of all new residential properties.

Experience indicates that a properly installed and maintained sprinkler system will save lives and reduce property losses. In fact, fire sprinklers, in co-operation with smoke alarms, increase survival rates by 82% over just using a smoke alarm.

Every day across Ontario, firefighters put themselves at risk, put themselves in harm's way, to protect us. Our government recognizes that Ontario's dedicated fire-fighters are the backbone of safety and security within our community. Please join me in actively promoting fire prevention strategies in your communities this week.

#### WORLD SIGHT DAY

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** Speaker, congratulations to you on your election.

Today is World Sight Day, an annual, worldwide event to highlight Vision 2020: the Right to Sight, to eliminate preventable blindness by the year 2020. Christian Blind Mission International, headquartered in my riding, is the leading agency in the world working for the prevention and cure of blindness. They provide medical and rehabilitation services to more than 11 million disabled and at-risk people each year, through more than 1,000 projects in over 100 countries. They also provide, free of charge, talking books for the visually impaired throughout Canada.

In Canada, one in nine people will develop irreversible vision loss by age 65, and by age 75 the number is one in four. The costs associated with vision loss are estimated at \$2 billion per year. That number soars to \$28 billion

worldwide. It doesn't have to be this way. Eighty per cent of blindness is avoidable through treatment and prevention.

Canada voted in support of the Vision 2020: the Right to Sight resolution at the 2003 World Health Assembly in Geneva. It calls on all levels of government to join the fight against preventable blindness.

Christian Blind Mission International calls upon government officials in this Legislature and across Canada to take a leadership role in the eradication of preventable blindness.

I ask members to join me in supporting the goal of World Sight Day. A good starting point for this government would be to keep Mr. McGuinty's personal election promise to provide expanded coverage for Visudyne treatment for all forms of age-related macular degeneration disease. I trust that you and members of this Legislature will join me in support of that resolution.

### FALCONBRIDGE STRIKE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** I stand here in solidarity with the brothers and sisters of CAW Local 599, Falconbridge, Timmins. Members would know that that particular bargaining unit had a strike vote on an offer put forward by the employer, which they've turned down.

I want to inform members in the House that it's a simple issue. Imagine: This particular union, which I believe is now in its third collective agreement since being certified, is trying to get the employer to put into the collective agreement the benefits they already got. These are not benefits they are asking for that they haven't got; they're asking the employer to take the benefits that they've always gotten and put them into the collective agreement. The company has taken the position that they won't do that, and unfortunately the workers of that union have been put in the position of having to vote to go out on strike.

I'm here today to ask the Premier, the Minister of Labour or anybody else on that side or on this side of the House, who is prepared to intervene, to assist. This is a strike that, in my view, can be averted. This is a situation that can be undone. We see Inco and Falconbridge merging. Let's hope that the savvy management of Inco prevails over the issue of Falconbridge and finally somebody recognizes that when you've already got something, it ain't a big leap to put it into a collective agreement. I would ask the Falconbridge management to do that.

1340

I know that we have at least one member on the Liberal side, who used to be a New Democrat, who's prepared to say, "Yes, I stand with the workers. I want to make sure that at the end they get a fair collective agreement."

I also look forward to being on the picket lines on Saturday with Charlie Angus, my federal member, and others to serve hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages, in solidarity with the brothers and sisters of CAW Local 599.

### VETERANS

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** Mr. Speaker, I too offer my congratulations to you on your election.

This year was designated the Year of the Veteran, and this past summer in particular was marked by numerous events commemorating Ontario's veterans and their contributions. I had the honour of hosting veterans from my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh at a barbecue this past Labour Day.

Among the veterans from past conflicts was one young man on leave from service in Afghanistan. Seeing him reminded me that, as important as it is to remember those who fought to promote freedom in the past, we must also offer our support to those doing so today. Without some tangible reminder, those of us living in comfort, free from the fear of war, could easily forget that our way of life is due to the sacrifices made by our veterans, both past and present.

The McGuinty government understands the importance of this legacy. This is why we have commissioned, for the first time in 65 years, a new monument to be placed on the front lawn here at Queen's Park.

I had the honour of attending the groundbreaking ceremony for this monument on August 17. When this monument is completed, student groups, tourist groups, even members of this Legislature, will be able to walk on the grounds of Queen's Park, see the veterans' memorial and associate the sacrifices of our veterans with the preservation of the democratic tradition represented by this House. This will certainly be our tribute to those who fought for our freedom.

### PAROLE SYSTEM

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** Congratulations, Mr. Speaker.

I'm really sorry to say that once again Dalton McGuinty is gambling with community safety. He's planning, as we speak, to pass over the keys of our valued provincial parole system to the National Parole Board as early as April 1, 2006.

Ontario's provincial parole system, the oldest in Canada, established in 1910, is there for a reason, and I'll explain it to the Liberals. It is to keep dangerous provincial offenders off our streets and to keep our communities safe.

Ontario has the largest provincial parole system in Canada. The Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board reviews all parole and early release applications from the more than 8,000 offenders in provincial jails and correctional centres. That's 41% of all provincially sentenced offenders in Canada, and more than the National Parole Board handles in seven other provinces and three territories combined.

Ontario's parole system is much tougher than the National Parole Board's. The OPERB approves only 22% of parole applications. The federal board approves



60% of parole applications for provincial offenders—almost three times the provincial rate. Provincial inmates are more dangerous than ever. With the increase in community sentencing since 1996, only the most serious provincial offenders are incarcerated. A tough parole system is more important than ever. Ontario's parole system is fully integrated with our provincial correctional facilities and the provincial probation system.

All of these are reasons why Monte Kwinter should stand up and fight at the cabinet table to maintain our current provincial parole system. As minister, he must stand up for safe communities. The citizens of Ontario deserve and expect safe communities, and we expect that the government will turn around and forget about this ridiculous decision.

### TEAM OTTAWA-ORLÉANS

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** I'm very pleased to announce that Team Ottawa-Orléans, a community group in my riding, has been awarded a \$200,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant that will help it make our community of Orléans an even better place to work and live.

Team Ottawa-Orléans was created to promote and develop community projects through a partnership that includes all levels of government, businesses, community groups and individual members of the community. The grant will be given over three years to support its work in short- and long-term strategic community development. What's great is that this money doesn't just benefit Team Ottawa-Orléans; it benefits everyone by allowing the group to implement new initiatives that will help strengthen our community.

As my riding grows, the needs of my constituents are growing with it. They want to know that the economic and social development of their community will reflect their ideas of what a great community looks like. Team Ottawa-Orléans will work to meet those needs in a way that is balanced, inclusive and coordinated. Whether it is big business or a single individual, anyone can participate. Even though the group was founded only one year ago, it has already established working groups to address issues such as health care, education, transportation and many others.

This grant marks a turning point for Team Ottawa-Orléans. It will turn planning into action, ideas into reality, and expand the group's presence in our community. I look forward to working with Team Ottawa-Orléans and watching the positive impact that this Trillium Foundation grant will have on my riding. Thank you.

### STEDMAN COMMUNITY HOSPICE

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** Speaker, I add my congratulations on your election and assure you that it is my intention not to get thrown out. I will do my best.

I am honoured to share with the House today an important development that has taken place in the riding of Brant. Last week, I was with the Minister of Health when we announced that our government will invest \$751,600 annualized to ensure that more people in the riding of Brant can access end-of-life services. Speaker, the Stedman Community Hospice in Brantford is one of the first of nine facilities to receive provincial funding. The president and CEO of the St. Joseph's Lifecare Foundation, Olga Consorti, said this about our government's investment:

"It's so wonderful to have a secure base of funding, and the people in the hospice were delighted for us. There were lots of tears of joy and hugs. Our hospice is a home-like facility that offers comfort and care for patients and their families during their last days.

"To the army of volunteers and staff that provide the loving care, we collectively thank them. Our citizens have diverse needs when it comes to end-of-life care, thus it is important for our government be able to provide them with different alternatives."

Four hundred and sixty thousand dollars will be added to the Stedman Community Hospice base budget, while \$291,000 will be allocated through our local CCAC for end-of-life home care. This is part of a \$150 million investment that we are making province-wide over the next three years.

I'm proud to be part of a government that recognizes that hospice and end-of-life care in our own homes are important parts of our health care system. Congratulations to the minister.

### WORLD SIGHT DAY

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** You've already heard from the member for Oak Ridges that today is World Sight Day, and again this year I'm rising to ask the Legislature to join me in recognizing World Sight Day.

World Sight Day is an international endeavour to help raise awareness on the issue of blindness. Around the world, every five seconds a person becomes blind, and every minute a child becomes blind. Eighty per cent of this blindness can be prevented and/or cured. World Sight Day is part of Vision 2020, a joint initiative of the World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness. Vision 2020 aims to eliminate avoidable preventable blindness by the year 2020.

This year's World Sight Day is marked by a launch of a report that will look back on the first five years of the Vision 2020 program and look forward to the next 15. In the Legislature today is Chris McLean, from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the CNIB, whose head office is located in Don Valley West and helps bring awareness to World Sight Day every year in Ontario and Canada. They are a national charitable organization, and one of Canada's leading vision health and rehabilitation organizations. In Ontario alone, they

serve some 50,000 clients of all ages. I would like to invite all members of the House to join me in commending the CNIB for its participation in this initiative.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** We have a distinguished guest in the east lobby, Mr. Balbir Dhillon, who represents the Bloordale Village Business Improvement Area.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. That, of course, is not a point of order, but welcome, Mr. Dhillon.

#### REPORTS OF PARLIAMENTARY OFFICERS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 36(g), the Premier has authorized the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, the member for Perth-Middlesex, to answer oral questions for the minister during the fall sitting.

##### *Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. There are too many conversations going on in here.

I beg to inform the House that during the adjournment, the following reports of parliamentary officers were tabled:

On June 22, 2005, the 2004 annual report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner; the 2004-05 annual report of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner, and the 2004-05 annual report of the lobbyists registration office; on July 4, 2005, the 2004-05 annual report of the Ombudsman; on September 1, 2005, the report of the Ombudsman entitled *From Hope to Despair: Whether the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Refusal to Fund the Drug Cystagon for Treatment of Batten's Disease is Unreasonable and Unfair*; on September 27, 2005, the report of the Ombudsman entitled *The Right to be Impatient: Whether the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has Failed to Properly Administer Newborn Screening in Ontario*.

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to ask for unanimous consent for the Minister of Health to make a statement regarding the Ombudsman's report on newborn screening.

**The Speaker:** Do we have unanimous consent? I heard a no.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that during the adjournment, the Clerk

received the report on intended appointments, dated September 7, 2005, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to standing order 106(e)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on social policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 183, An Act respecting the disclosure of information and records to adopted persons and birth parents / *Projet de loi 183, Loi traitant de la divulgation de renseignements et de dossiers aux personnes adoptées et à leurs pères ou mères de sang.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

The ayes have it. Carried.

##### COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA JUSTICE STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY

**M. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke-Nord):** Monsieur le Président, je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la justice et je propose son adoption.

I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on justice policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 159, An Act to revise the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act and to make a consequential amendment to the Licence Appeal Tribunal Act, 1999 / *Projet de loi 159, Loi révisant la Loi sur les enquêteurs privés et les gardiens et apportant une modification corrélative à la Loi de 1999 sur le Tribunal d'appel en matière de permis.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1352 to 1357.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

##### Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bountrogianni, Marie  
Bradley, James J.

Fonseca, Peter  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave

Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramsay, David  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Ruprecht, Tony



Brownell, Jim  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Chambers, Mary Anne V.  
Colle, Mike  
Cordiano, Joseph  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Duncan, Dwight  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Milloy, John  
Mitchell, Carol  
Oraziotti, David  
Peters, Steve  
Peterson, Tim  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra

Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Smitherman, George  
Sorbara, Gregory S.  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Wong, Tony C.  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Zimmer, David

élections et la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative, abrogeant la Loi de 1996 sur la représentation électorale et édictant la Loi de 2005 sur la représentation électorale.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

#### WEARING OF RIBBONS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I rise to ask unanimous consent of the House for us to wear these purple ribbons. October is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and I was hoping that we would be able to wear these ribbons in the Legislature as a sign of our support for this very important initiative in the month of October.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark-Carleton):** As Chair of the public accounts committee, and pursuant to the order of the House of Monday, June 13, I beg leave to present a report on the maintenance of the provincial highway system from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Sterling:** For those not aware of the work of the public accounts committee, made up of all parties of this Legislature, the committee reviews each year the auditor's report, which traditionally comes down in the late part of November of each year. So these reports I'm presenting today, four in all, will take into account four different subject matters on which the auditor reported in November 2004.

The committee calls before it the deputy minister of each ministry and other officials from the ministry to ask the ministry and ministry officials what they are going to do to meet the auditor's observations with regard to inefficiencies, lack of inspections, those kinds of things, which are occurring within each ministry. As a result of those hearings, the ministry then makes recommendations in the reports that I'm bringing forward today. In many cases, we ask for replies from the ministry with regard to the recommendations we make. We traditionally give the ministry 120 days to reply. I hope in the future that I will be reporting to the Legislative Assembly on the ministry's reply to our recommendations.

I'd like to thank all members of the committee for their input. All of these reports have received unanimous approval by all members of the committee, representing all three parties.

With that, I adjourn the debate on this particular motion.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Amott, Ted  
Baird, John R.  
Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Churley, Marilyn  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Hampton, Howard  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Horwath, Andrea

Hudak, Tim  
Jackson, Cameron  
Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
Marchese, Rosario  
Martel, Shelley  
Miller, Norm  
Munro, Julia  
O'Toole, John  
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Prue, Michael  
Runciman, Robert W.  
Scott, Laurie  
Sterling, Norman W.  
Tascona, Joseph N.  
Tory, John  
Wilson, Jim  
Witmer, Elizabeth  
Yakubuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 50; the nays are 29.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on general government and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 169, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and to amend and repeal various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters / Projet de loi 169, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et modifiant et abrogeant diverses autres lois à l'égard de questions relatives au transport.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed.

The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I beg leave to present a report from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Todd Decker):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 214, An Act to amend the Election Act, the Election Finances Act and the Legislative Assembly Act, to repeal the Representation Act, 1996 and to enact the Representation Act, 2005 / Projet de loi 214, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur le financement des



**The Speaker:** Mr. Sterling moves adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Mr. Sterling:** Pursuant to the order of the House of June 13, I beg leave to present a report on the Ontario rights and responsibilities program from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker:** Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Sterling:** I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Mr. Sterling:** Pursuant to the order of the House of June 13, I beg leave to present a report on the air quality program from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker:** Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Sterling:** I move adjournment of this debate.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Mr. Sterling:** Pursuant to the order of the House of June 13, I beg leave to present a report on independent health facilities from the standing committee on public accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker:** Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Sterling:** With regard to this last report, I would like to ask this Legislative Assembly, and particularly the Minister of Health, to read this report and consider its recommendations very seriously. All of the committee members felt that there was some foot-dragging, not by ministry officials but by outside agencies, with respect to the inspection of independent health facilities. It is our hope that the recommendations in this report will give strength to the ministry in asking outside agencies to work with them with regard to setting up committees and the formation of groups that will in fact go into these independent health facilities and test them, particularly without notice to them.

With that, I move adjournment of the debate on this matter.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

1410

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### HOME FIRE SPRINKLER ACT, 2005

### LOI DE 2005 SUR LES EXTINCTEURS AUTOMATIQUES DOMICILIAIRES

Mrs. Jeffrey moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 2, An Act to amend the Building Code Act, 1992 respecting home fire sprinklers / Projet de loi 2, Loi

modifiant la Loi de 1992 sur le code du bâtiment en ce qui a trait aux extincteurs automatiques domiciliaires.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a short statement?

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** Improving upon my previous private member's bill, Bill 141, which incorporated sprinkler systems into only new detached, semi-detached and row houses, the Home Fire Sprinkler Act, 2005, will ensure that all new residential properties, including apartment buildings, are constructed to include fire sprinklers. This bill endeavours to prevent the devastating loss of life and property.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENT ACT (ASSISTANCE TO MUNICIPALITIES), 2005

## LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DES VOIES PUBLIQUES

Mr. Yakabuski moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 3, An Act to amend the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act with respect to the assistance that the Minister provides to municipalities / Projet de loi 3, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies publiques et des transports en commun à l'égard de l'aide apportée aux municipalités par le ministre.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I rise today to reintroduce my private member's bill from the past session: the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Amendment Act (Assistance to Municipalities), 2005. This bill, if passed by this Legislature, will ensure that if the Minister of Transportation enters into an agreement with a municipality to provide a rebate of tax under the Gasoline Tax Act to any municipality for the purpose of constructing, maintaining or operating a rapid transit or public transportation system, the minister could not refuse to enter into an agreement to provide a rebate of tax under that act on the same per capita basis to any municipality for the purpose of constructing, maintaining or operating public highways in that municipality.

The roads, bridges and highways in rural Ontario are our public transportation system, and it is only fair that if our tax dollars are being used to subsidize urban transportation systems, the needs of rural Ontario should also be supported. I hope that all members of this Legislature from all political parties will support this important bill, which I firmly believe will ensure fairness while recognizing the significant economic and cultural contribution made by those who live in rural Ontario.

HEALTH INSURANCE  
AMENDMENT ACT (PSA TESTS FOR  
PROSTATE CANCER), 2005

LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR L'ASSURANCE-SANTÉ  
(TEST PSA POUR LE DÉPISTAGE  
DU CANCER DE LA PROSTATE)

Mr. Mauro moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 4, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act /  
Projet de loi 4, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Shall the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Bill Mauro (Thunder Bay–Atikokan):** The purpose of the amendment would be so that the PSA test, or prostate-specific antigen test, which is a blood-screening test for men in danger of prostate cancer, would be an insurable service under the Health Insurance Act.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 206

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that the order for second reading of Bill 206, An Act to revise the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System Act, be discharged and that the bill be referred to the standing committee on general government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I move that, notwithstanding standing order 96(d), the following change be made to the ballot list of private members' public business: Mr. Mauro and Mr. Rinaldi exchange places in order of precedence, such that Mr. Mauro assumes ballot item 5 and Mr. Rinaldi assumes ballot item 25; Mr. Wilkinson and Ms. Jeffrey exchange places in order of precedence, such that Mr. Wilkinson assumes ballot item 39 and Ms. Jeffrey assumes ballot item 6; Mr. Parsons and Mr. Gravelle exchange places in order of precedence, such that Mr. Parsons assumes ballot item 3 and Mr. Gravelle assumes ballot item 11; and that, notwithstanding standing order 96(g), notice be waived for ballot items 1 through 4.

**The Speaker:** Shall the motion carry? Carried.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

HEALTH CARE

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Mr. Speaker, before you're given the opportunity for me to regret what I'm about to say, I do with other members want to welcome you to your new role.

It is with great pride that I rise in my place today to speak about some recent developments in health care, developments that I believe bode extremely well for the future of a system upon which we all depend. It's been almost four months since we last gathered here, but make no mistake, it sure hasn't been a vacation. My co-workers in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and our many stakeholders and colleagues across the province have been very hard at work, and the system itself has been very hard at work. Government health care providers, officials and volunteers have all come together in the name of building a better health care system, and a better health care system is being built.

We have, without question, many challenges remaining, and those are well known, but we have many accomplishments worthy of celebration. Let me take a moment to share with you just some of the historic achievements and successes:

We've expanded newborn screening programs.

We are building on a world-class flu shot program, and flu season, as we know, is just around the corner.

Ontario now has the toughest, most comprehensive anti-tobacco strategy in North America.

The province's share of public health funding now sits at 55%, being uploaded from the 50% it was when we took office and on track for the 75% it will be at in 2007-08.

I'm delighted to acknowledge my colleague the Minister of Health Promotion, who will ensure that "healthier Ontarians" remains a very central priority for this government in the months to come.

But that's not all. I'm also very proud to report that this government has made investments in community-level care that are unprecedented in Ontario's history. Let me quickly highlight some of these.

Forty-five thousand additional Ontarians are receiving care in the comfort of their own homes this year.

End-of-life care: An additional 6,000 Ontarians will be able to live out their lives in the comfort and the dignity of home or at least in a residential hospice, thanks to a \$115-million expansion that includes the funding of 30 residential hospices in Ontario through 2007-08.

Community mental health services have enjoyed a 21% funding increase.

Long-term care: a 10% funding increase for 700 new beds and the hiring of additional staff.

1420

We've also made great progress improving the access Ontarians have to nurses and to doctors. As you all know,



we reached an agreement last winter with this province's doctors, one that makes Ontario an extremely attractive place to practise medicine. Under that agreement, various fee increases kicked in earlier this month. This money will go to support doctors working in group practices, more after-hours patient care and more care for seniors.

And these measures are beginning to pay off. Last year, the province of Ontario issued more medical licences than we have in almost 20 years. In 2004, we now know that more doctors moved into Ontario from abroad than left here. That is the first time that has happened, ever, and it's very good news.

Let me give you a little more, by the numbers:

—medical school enrolment: a 15% increase over the next four years;

—family residency positions: a 70% increase, resulting in 340 additional family doctors by 2007-08. Under our leadership, people want to be family doctors again.

We're training more international medical graduates than ever before.

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean—Carleton):** You're the best, George.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I'm being heckled, Mr. Speaker, by the member from Nepean.

Family health teams are taking shape—69 of them in 47 communities.

We have delivered stable, multi-year funding for hospitals.

We've created more than 3,000 full-time nursing jobs, and the percentage of full-time nursing jobs today stands at 59%, up from 51%, according to the Ontario College of Nurses.

Finally, in the area of wait times, we are making tremendous progress. We have funded almost 240,000 additional procedures in five critical areas:

- hips and knees, 28% more procedures delivered;
- cataracts, 16% more;
- cancer surgeries, an 11% increase;
- cardiac procedures, a 17% increase; and
- MRIs, 42% more procedures delivered since we launched our wait times strategy.

While those are a lot of numbers, what they add up to is better health care for Ontarians. And we are doing more.

I can tell you that this coming Monday we will be launching our wait times Web site, a Web site that will empower Ontarians by providing them with accurate and timely information about wait times, broken out by specific procedure, by hospital, by local health integration network.

I want to urge my colleagues to think about that. Think of the power we will be putting in the hands of patients, the likes of which they have simply never had before. With the tap of a few keys, they will be able to find out how long the wait is for a particular procedure at their local hospital, and with the tap of a few more, they will be able to look for another hospital where the wait perhaps isn't as long. With the help of their doctor, they will be able to get care in that environment.

Because this data is broken out by local health integration networks, hospitals within each local health integration network will be better able to work together to share the wait times burden. I call that the system helping the system, and it is precisely the kind of critical community dialogue that local health integration networks are designed to foster.

This Web site will serve Ontarians very well. It is a model of transparency. It will give Ontarians the information that they need to take control of their own health care and their own health care system, and it will drive accountability into the system.

On the subject of accountability, I'm proud to remind my colleagues that we have launched the Ontario Health Quality Council. Its mandate is to monitor the province's health care system and to report to the public on access to publicly funded health services, access to doctors and nurses, and the overall health of Ontarians.

What that means is that the council is going to tell the health care story to Ontarians in a way that it has never been told to them before. The health care discussion that we once carried on in the boardrooms and in speeches here in the Legislature, with indirect input from the rest of Ontarians every four years, was an exclusive discussion, complete with language rife with acronyms that almost seemed designed to discourage public participation. No longer: The Ontario Health Quality Council is going to make the health care discussion accessible to anyone in the province who cares to pay attention.

The council is an independent body. It couldn't do the job we need it to if it weren't. It's going to shine a light on the health care system we are building and running on behalf of Ontarians and give them a sense of how well we are doing together. It's their health care system. It's paid for with their tax dollars. They own the system and they have a right, accordingly, to know how well their money is being spent.

So, yes, this is indeed an impressive list, but our work is not yet done, and our legislative agenda will reflect that. In the coming months, my colleagues will have a chance to reflect on and debate legislation that is of critical importance in the area of long-term care, in the area of traditional Chinese medicine, and related to health care transformation. I look forward to a spirited debate and a productive sharing of ideas as we move forward with the task of making Ontario's health care system the best that it can be and making sure that Ontarians are the healthiest Canadians.

#### TOYOTA PLANT IN WOODSTOCK

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** It is indeed a pleasure to rise in this House today to share a great story with the people of Ontario.

When this government first took office, I met with members of Ontario's auto sector. They told me tales of gloom and doom. They said this province's anchor industry was going nowhere. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to



stand in this House today and tell you that that is history. It's yesterday's news.

What is happening today in this great province is truly remarkable. It's remarkable because the people of Ontario are realizing their true potential. Our citizens have once again started to believe that they can achieve great—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. I'm having difficulty hearing the minister. Members know that only one member at a time has the floor, and we'll respect the other members' time. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** Citizens have started to believe once again that they can achieve great things in this province, that nothing they reach for is impossible.

This spring, Toyota announced it was building the first new greenfield auto plant in Ontario in 20 years. Toyota prides itself on quality and innovation. It strives for excellence in the innovative cars it builds. To do that, it will only trust the very best and most highly skilled workforce with Toyota's name and reputation. Toyota believes in the workers of Ontario. Look at Cambridge. The plant in that community is the only plant outside of Japan that builds the Lexus. Why? Because Toyota knows Ontario workers have met the challenge of building their flagship luxury car.

When I first became Minister of Economic Development and Trade, the dream of luring another Toyota plant to Ontario was far off. Some thought it was unattainable. But I knew that armed with the knowledge that our auto workers are the best in the world, we could reach this goal. That's what getting this plant means for the people of Ontario: It means we can compete with the best and win.

Sure, there was competition. There was lots of competition, because everyone knows the automobile industry is hugely competitive and every jurisdiction around the world wants the next auto plant. But we didn't let that scare us away. Instead, we worked hard for what we wanted. We started getting the kinds of investments in our auto industry that had other countries sitting up and taking notice. We had GM, Ford and International Truck making huge investments in our industry. Our \$500-million auto strategy was working. Toyota took notice too. We were showing them what our Ontario workers could do in Cambridge, and what a partnership with a proactive provincial government could do.

It was a great day when the Premier and I attended the groundbreaking in Woodstock this past Tuesday. The whole world was watching Ontario, and we were proud to be there.

This government wants Ontarians to know that there is nothing we can't achieve if we work together. We are not going to settle for second best. We are not going to settle for mediocrity. Like Toyota, quality and innovation are crucial to this government.

I am pleased to tell you that already we are seeing spinoff benefits from Toyota's investment. Indeed, this is happening right across our auto industry. Automodular Corp., maker of parts for cars and trucks, is opening in

Oakville, creating 400 new jobs. On Tuesday, Warren Industries, another auto supplier, announced it will open a new plant in London, and Arkal Industries of Israel will also open shop in London. These are real benefits.

**1430**

We have already seen \$4.5 billion of new auto investment in just 18 months, and that's just the beginning. Toyota will employ 1,300 people when it opens its new plant in Woodstock. Each one of those employees will be well paid because of the skilled work they do. Even more than that, they will be telling the rest of Ontario that our province is the best place in the world to build an automobile. Those workers will tell their children that they too can achieve their dreams, and that's because of the kind of culture we are building here in this great province.

I look forward to standing in this House again very soon with more news of the great opportunities we are seizing, because we are confident that Ontario is the best place in the world to do business.

**The Speaker:** Responses?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** It's good news from Toyota—1,300 new jobs in Woodstock—but what about the flip side? What about the other side of the coin? What about the rest of the story? What about the Ford story, where they're laying off 1,100 people? What about the Chrysler story, where 500 to 1,000 people are being laid off? What about the GM story, where it's 1,000 to 1,500 people, many of them in St. Catharines, which our new House leader will be happy about? The new jobs equal 1,300; the lost jobs equal 2,600 to 3,600. This is not an equation for prosperity. This is not how these people reach their goals.

Add this to the closing of Nestlé's coffee plant in Chesterville, where 300 people have gone; add it to Alcoa layoffs in Collingwood of 420 people; add it to the ConAgra Chef Boyardee plant closing in Niagara Falls, with 240 jobs laid off.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** I'm having some difficulty hearing. One member at a time, with respect for the one who has the floor.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** I'll try to speak louder.

Kaufman Furniture is closing in Collingwood—147 jobs; Backyard Products closed—230 jobs; Nacan, an old company, closing—87 jobs gone; and Blue Mountain Pottery is closing its doors. I don't know how many years that's been in business. It was a hallmark of Ontario manufacturing. These Ontarians are not realizing their potential.

In fact, September manufacturing job numbers in Ontario were down 42,000 jobs from just one year ago, to say nothing of the north, where your electricity policy is destroying the pulp and paper industry. There is not one plant that is not looking at layoffs or closures, because they can't compete with other jurisdictions on electricity prices alone. Abitibi Consolidated have cut their paper production in half and cut more than 300 jobs. The Minister of Natural Resources—he's got the answers

to the problems here—says, “Some pulp and paper mills will close.” What a wonderful thing for the minister to say. Twelve mills are at risk of closing. There have been 6,000 jobs lost in the north under your watch.

Minister, you and your government are presiding over the destruction of Ontario’s manufacturing industry, and heaven help us, because Mr. Brownout is now in charge of finance and the economy.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** This speech today is the same one that was delivered last week at the St. Lawrence Market, which got no pick-up whatsoever by the media. I can tell you, this is cold comfort to the people in Ontario who recognize that this government continues to mismanage health care. Talk to the person who’s on the waiting list and who has seen no change in two years. Talk to the person who is looking for a family doctor and can’t find one. Talk to the about 800 nurses who have been fired despite the promise to hire 8,000 more. The minister claims there are 3,000 new nurses. Tell that to the people who are part of that 3,000, who have three-month- and six-month-term positions. Those are not full-time permanent positions.

Furthermore, tell the people who are paying the new health tax of \$2.4 billion, some of them paying up to \$900 per year. At the same time these people are paying more in health taxes, despite the promise of the government not to do so, they’re getting less. They don’t have free eye care. They don’t have the chiropractic care and they don’t have physiotherapy. So, despite the fact that this government says these are recent developments, people are paying more and they’re getting less.

I’d like to clarify some of the facts. The minister talks about the newborn screening program. We know that the only reason for the expansion was because of the Ombudsman’s report. He talked about the flu shot program.

I’d like to remind the McGuinty government that it was our government that introduced the world-class flu shot program in 2000. In fact, we became the first jurisdiction in North America to make flu vaccine available at no charge to everybody in this province.

He talks about promotion. We didn’t need a new minister of promotion. We simply set about making sure the programs were there: healthy hearts; Healthy Babies, Healthy Children; asthma prevention; diabetes prevention—the list goes on and on.

In fact, it was our government that introduced 20,000 new long-term-care beds. We introduced the home care program, and we created funding for 100,000 people in this province.

We made the announcement of the new northern Ontario medical school. It was part of the strategy to improve access to physicians in the province of Ontario.

We introduced the new family health networks. In fact, there were 3,000 physicians who served three million patients under—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

### TOYOTA PLANT IN WOODSTOCK

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I’m responding to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Notwithstanding his take on things, the fact of the matter is that Ontario has a faltering economy, losing 42,000 jobs since the McGuinty Liberals took charge in this province—thousands of those jobs in the auto sector, as a matter of fact.

The NDP has long advocated, and everyone knows it, for sector-based strategies—definitely in auto but in many other areas as well: in the steel industry, in forestry, in northern Ontario, a place where this government is failing miserably, I have to say.

The McGuinty government has definitely made some investments in auto—absolutely. However, in our opinion they’re long overdue. But it also needs to start looking at some other areas of this economy.

New Democrats believe there needs to be some investment in the steel sector as well. That investment has to go hand in hand with what’s happening in the auto sector.

Another big problem with the statement of this minister today is that it omits a number of initiatives that working families need. It omits a number of initiatives that would make it a comprehensive package for all working families, that would address issues that ordinary people are very concerned about and that workers in this province are worried about: things like high hydro prices that are crippling some of our major employers and manufacturers in this province—that’s what the minister left out. Employee protection legislation that requires companies to negotiate with workers before plants close was left out of the speech. Strengthened pension benefit guarantees—that was left out as well. The reintroduction of the NDP’s employee wage protection act that makes sure employees go to the front of the list when a company goes bankrupt and their wages are protected—that’s what this minister left out. Upgrading of Ontario’s infrastructure to make sure that bottlenecks going across the border are reduced so that goods can continue to travel in an effective way—that’s what that minister left out. Card-based certification so that all workers have a fair opportunity to be represented and protected by a union—that’s what this minister left out.

I wanted to share something that CAW President Buzz Hargrove said about the federal Liberal government just last year: “They, too, sat on the sidelines for years, mouthing platitudes about how government ‘shouldn’t pick winners,’” he said. ““They ignored the successful lessons of our automotive past, and they took the auto industry for granted—and we are” still “paying for it today.”

The minister’s statement does nothing to affect that.

### HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** In the time I have, I want to remind the public of some of the broken Liberal



health care promises. On the health care tax, Premier Dalton McGuinty said, on January 5, 2002, "Tory leadership candidates Ernie Eves and Chris Stockwell may want to raise taxes, by charging families an additional \$1,000 a year for health care. I do not," McGuinty said...

"Families are already paying for health care with their taxes. Pay more for health care, pay twice for health care, but get less health care—that's the Tory plan. It's certainly not the Liberal plan...."

"If Eves were Premier, you'd pay at least three times: with your taxes, with your premiums, and, if you have the cash, out of your own pocket to get premium service...."

1440

"Instead of looking for ways to make Ontarians pay more, we must look for better ways to invest the precious dollars Ontarians already give us,"—and then this government whacked Ontarians with a \$2.4-billion health care tax in its first budget.

What did McGuinty say with respect to private financing of hospitals? Here we are in the Ottawa Citizen, May 28, 2003:

"What I take issue with is the mechanism. We believe in public ownership and public financing (of health care)...."

"Mr. McGuinty believes that public-private sector partnerships in health care would ultimately cost the province more money than traditional arrangements."

Then on Wednesday, September 24, 2003: "Ontario Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty has said the ROH expansion will go ahead because Ontario needs a new psychiatric hospital, but a Liberal government would cancel the deal with the private consortium because public-private partnerships are a waste of money." I agree. Isn't it a shame that the Conservative policy is now the Liberal policy and people are going to pay through the nose for private sector financing of hospitals?

The Liberal government, before the election, promised it would reinstate 2.25 hours of nursing care for residents in long-term-care facilities. Have we seen that? No, we have not. This government said they would end the arbitrary restrictions on home care that the previous government put in place. Have we seen regulations to change those restrictions? No, we have not.

Let me end with this. The government is going to reorganize health care. A recent SES poll showed that 50% of the Ontario population think that this is going to cost more, that 39% think they are going to get less service. That's what people think of Liberal plans to reorganize health care.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. We'll just wait.

It's now time for oral questions. Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think there has been an arrangement made to make a statement on the earthquake.

## EARTHQUAKE IN SOUTH ASIA

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, do you wish to ask for—

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I ask for unanimous consent for each party to have five minutes to speak about the South Asian earthquake.

**The Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Last weekend, while most of us were with our loved ones at Thanksgiving, a terrible earthquake struck South Asia, wreaking havoc on Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, shattering buildings and claiming an estimated 40,000 lives, and it's not over yet. This disaster brought a response from people around the world and right across Ontario who are coming to the aid of their fellow human beings in their time of need. Ontario is home to people from throughout the world, so no matter how far disaster strikes from our own borders, it affects us all, and we respond.

This morning, I signed a book of condolence, along with Lieutenant Governor James Bartleman and the Consuls General of India and Pakistan. I offered each of them my deepest sympathy on behalf of the people of Ontario. I invite all Ontarians to join with me in expressing their sympathy by signing one of the books of condolence. It's open to the public, beginning today through Sunday, in the Legislative Building here at Queen's Park. For those not able to come to the Legislative Building, the books will be available on the Lieutenant Governor's Web site.

I also want to join with people across our province in offering our help. On Sunday night, Premier McGuinty spoke with the Consuls General of India and Pakistan, and offered his deepest condolences and support. While the Consul General of India said they are managing, the Consul General of Pakistan reiterated his President's request for help.

On Thanksgiving Monday, the Premier announced a five-point response plan. First, the government of Ontario pledged an immediate donation of \$1 million on behalf of the people of Ontario to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for relief in the area. The Premier also asked me to pull together an earthquake response team. The team includes the Commissioner of Emergency Management, Julian Fantino, and Ontario's chief medical officer of health, Dr. Sheela Basur. They have both the experience and expertise to assess how Ontario can be most effective in its response.

The province is working closely with the federal government to make available any assets, further equipment, supplies or expertise necessary to help the global relief effort.

Premier McGuinty also asked all Ontario public service employees to give generously to the relief effort. Flags across the province have been lowered to half mast since Monday.

The Premier has also renewed a call for all Ontarians to donate generously to their local relief organizations.



Ontarians are answering the call. The grief and pain felt by over 500,000 Ontarians of South Asian origin is profound, only surpassed by their incredible generosity. A west-end Toronto mosque raised more than \$55,000 in Pakistan earthquake relief in just 20 minutes last Sunday.

Over the last two days, at this most holy time of Ramadan, I have visited the Cooper Mosque in Mississauga. I've also visited the Nugget Mosque in Scarborough to join in prayers and offer support and condolences. We have been in ongoing contact with the consuls of Pakistan and India, letting them know Ontario is here to help in their time of need. The need is great, as is the generosity of all Ontarians.

I would like to offer my personal thanks to all those across Ontario who are helping, giving and volunteering. This is the kind of generosity that strengthens our people and our province. This is not just a catastrophe affecting those of South Asian origin; it affects us all. Their pain is our pain. They are our friends, our neighbours, our workmates.

If you could see the outpouring of generosity in all these communities across this great province, where they are giving the last \$10 in their pocket to help those who have been so dramatically impacted by this awful earthquake, you would be so proud of the newcomers who have come to this great province.

I really encourage all Ontarians—in small business, big business, individual Ontarians—to please be generous, because they really need our help. As Ontarians, we are generous and we are going to be there with our fellow human beings who have been so unjustly impacted by this earthquake.

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** It hardly seems possible it could happen again this year, but over the past week Ontarians have once again watched with horror the devastation that has been inflicted on millions of people in Pakistan, India, Afghanistan and Kashmir in the wake of last weekend's earthquakes and the aftershocks that have followed, up to and including last night.

The scope of this disaster, like the other ones we've seen, almost defies description. The lost of life, upwards of 30,000 so far, is as incomprehensible as what we saw in the case of the tsunami. Hundreds of thousands more are today without food, without homes and without shelter.

The scope of this disaster shocks us all. Of the half-million Ontarians of Indian and Pakistani descent, this tragedy hits particularly close to home. For these families, this is a difficult time. Today, many Ontario families are still, as we speak, struggling to locate missing loved ones in that region, while more still stagger under the uncertainty and sorrow of a disaster unfolding on the other side of the globe. Fortunately, what we have seen is how important friends and neighbours are here where we live, in our province, when disaster strikes a world away.

I know I speak for all in the Progressive Conservative caucus, and indeed throughout this House, when I extend our thoughts and prayers to the families impacted by this disaster. To our friends and neighbours in Ontario's

South Asian communities, and in particular to those families who have lost a loved one, you have our deepest condolences during this sad time. As Pakistan in particular struggles to recover and to rebuild, it must happen with our full support.

Right now, it is incumbent on all of us to make our top priority doing what we can to help in the rescue and relief efforts of Pakistani, Indian and international authorities. I would like to commend the Premier and the government of Ontario and the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, as well as our counterparts in the federal government, for their quick initial response to this tragedy. Certainly, if there is any way in which I or any members of the Progressive Conservative caucus can assist in this effort, we are prepared to do our part. In that regard, I was happy to offer, as did the leader of the third party, to sit down with the Premier and discuss ways in which we could send a united, bipartisan message in this regard in any way that we possibly could.

**1450**

Time is the enemy now, and the more that we as Ontarians and Canadians do right now, today, could very well make the difference between life and death. I think this is really what the minister was directing his comments to as well. As he did, I encourage any Ontarian with the means to contribute what they can to that international relief effort.

I had the privilege to be a volunteer fundraiser for decades for a variety of organizations across the province, and I have found in that experience many, many times that challenge grants can often stimulate more people to step up.

I know the federal government has offered to match private contributions made by individual Canadians over the next two weeks. I wonder if maybe the government of Ontario and the Premier would consider matching funds donated by Ontarians during the third week up to, say, an additional \$1 million as a means of trying to encourage people who are inclined to do the right thing, but more people to step up who might otherwise have not thought about that. In that third week, after the federal challenge grant runs out, it is a time, frankly, when the media coverage will be diminishing; it is precisely the time, however, when the real, hard work of relief and recovery will just be beginning.

In the days and weeks ahead, we must come also come together as a province and as a country to support the local families who have suffered losses and who have lost the most among us.

In a year that has already seen the staggering devastation wrought by the South Asian tsunami and the tremendous damage left in the wake of two hurricanes in the southern US and another in Central America, the Kashmir earthquake stands as yet another sobering reminder of how fragile life is when faced with nature's wrath.

In the days and weeks ahead, let us take a page from the response that we all showed together in response to the tsunami and to the hurricanes. Let us stand together in

support of the affected families overseas and here at home. Let us do all that we can to alleviate the suffering and repair the damage from this calamity, and do our part to help the families impacted to return to a normal life. I know that if we really work at this together, we can do even more, as we should.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** On behalf of New Democrats, I extend condolences to the families of the many victims in the cities and villages in Pakistan, India, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

The entire province of Ontario shares in the grief at this time of shock, loss and suffering on a catastrophic scale. With more aftershocks hitting these countries, the enormity of this tragedy in terms of loss of life across the regions grows each day. Small villages are destroyed and whole generations are lost, something that for most of us is beyond our comprehension. This disaster has extended beyond borders, beyond ethnic and religious differences. We are all affected and we all need to help.

The task ahead is immense, but the determination and collective spirit of the people affected by this earthquake, with the help of Ontarians, will make a difference. Rescue and rebuilding will require strong leadership from all people, including elected officials here in Ontario.

It is very important at this difficult time for the victims and the families of victims living in Ontario to know that they are not alone. For this reason, I urge all Ontarians to contribute generously to relief efforts. For this reason, I have called on the Premier and the leader of the official opposition to join me to discuss ways in which we can work together to further the aid and assistance to make a difference, not only for people in the countries affected but for their families and extended families here in Ontario.

As always, New Democrats are prepared to work with the government and the opposition in any effort to support relief efforts abroad and to comfort Ontario residents who have been touched by this catastrophe.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been affected.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO SPEAKER

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Mr. Speaker, if I might take, before oral questions, on what is not technically a point of order, but let me just take the opportunity to congratulate you in a more formal way on your assumption of responsibilities as Speaker, and to offer, on behalf of our party, our every support and confidence. We wish you the very best in your new responsibilities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you, Premier. It's not a point of order.

Oral questions.

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I'm not sure what this is, then, Mr. Speaker, but may I join the Premier on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus in congratulating you on your election as Speaker and pledging our co-operation in working with you and wish-

ing you every success in the challenging job you have in the months ahead.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### RCMP INVESTIGATION

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier and it concerns the diligence and standards applied to ensuring the legitimacy of the ministry. Can the Premier tell us when on Tuesday he received his very first indication of the search warrant we now all know about, and what was the substance of that information?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm pleased to speak to the issue. I received information later in the afternoon; I don't have the exact time. I think it's been well documented in today's newspapers. There may have been a Premier at some point in our history who moved as quickly as I did but I am not aware of that. Shortly thereafter, I met with then-Minister Sorbara and he tendered his resignation. We moved to make a shuffle of the cabinet and we proceeded with the throne speech the following day. That's the long and short of it.

**Mr. Tory:** I first heard in my office of the search warrant on Tuesday morning. I was asked about the search and about the search warrant at 1:45 at a news conference, which was attended by members of your staff. When we got to the Legislature at 4 o'clock, it was on the lips of people throughout the chamber. By 4:30 in the afternoon, a copy of the search warrant had some circulation in this building and there was open discussion of the fact that the former finance minister's name was contained in the warrant. My question is this: With all of the staff you have and all the discussion all day in the building, don't you think it is reasonable, if anybody really thought this was important, if anybody thought this would be at the top of your list in terms of things you are concerned about, that somebody might have made inquiries on your behalf prior to your hearing about this, according to the accounts you referred to, at 7 o'clock at night, over five hours after I was asked about it at a news conference?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm not exactly sure what the Leader of the Opposition is driving at here. As soon as I was made aware of that information and within a span of six or seven hours, a minister had tendered his resignation, I had sworn in two new ministers, I had appointed a new House leader and I was getting on with our responsibilities. I'm not sure we could have moved any faster under the circumstances.

**Mr. Tory:** There are a number of commentaries in the media today suggesting that it might have been better if the Premier had enforced higher standards a year and a half ago with respect to this matter. The Premier made that judgment at that time in keeping with what I assume



are his standards, and that judgment now forms part of the record.

My question is this: Between the time of your initial agreement with your former finance minister in 2004 that he would remain, notwithstanding a number of investigations that were underway at that time, what specific steps did the Premier take to keep himself informed about the scope and status of those investigations, to the extent one could, in order to ensure that nothing was happening which required any action on his part?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I am not sure if the Leader of the Opposition understands what he is intimating. We took every possible step to remain at more than arm's length away from any investigation of any kind. So it's no surprise in some ways that we did not find out until the very end. In fact, the Attorney General has specifically requested that any overtures or requests for information be referred to the ministry of justice on Parliament Hill.

Let me take this opportunity to say thank you to former Minister Greg Sorbara for duly and faithfully serving the people of Ontario and the people of his riding for an extended period of time and performing remarkably well as our Minister of Finance.

1500

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Tory:** I say to the Premier, with respect, that this is not an issue about Mr. Sorbara's period of service as a minister; it is an issue that has to do with important standards and important benchmarks that have to be set in terms of ensuring the legitimacy of the ministry. I have said repeatedly in all of my comments—yesterday, today and the day before—that no one hopes more than I—we all do—that this results in the complete exoneration of the former Minister of Finance.

My question is this—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Leader of the Opposition has the floor. He has the right, indeed the duty, to ask his question without undue help.

**Mr. Tory:** Again to the Premier: Would you agree with me that by the time a search warrant is executed, a criminal investigation has already been underway for some time and perhaps a considerable period of time?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I am not going to comment in any way, shape or form on any investigation of any kind.

I think the important thing here is that as soon as Mr. Sorbara was made aware of the fact that his name appeared on a warrant, which made it perfectly clear that he was, in part, the subject of an investigation—not a charge, an investigation—he stepped forward and did what was the right thing: He decided to step aside pending the outcome of the investigation. I think that was the appropriate thing to do in the circumstances, I think it was the right thing to do in the circumstances, and I commend him once again for it.

**Mr. Tory:** I'm not asking the Premier to comment on any investigation, nor am I saying anything about

whether or not the former Minister of Finance did the right thing. He did do the right thing. However, we both have legal training, I say to the Premier, and we know full well that by the time a search warrant is executed, an investigation has already been underway for some time.

What this is about is the standards, thresholds and tests that are going to be applied to ministers. Nineteen months ago, you made the statement that should your Minister of Finance find himself at the centre of an investigation, he would resign, that you and he had agreed on that. You made this agreement, I say to the Premier, knowing full well there was no way you could know if your former minister was the subject of an investigation until the RCMP literally arrived with a search warrant, and that is precisely the problem with your standard. Do you think it is a good enough standard to ensure the integrity of your government in cases like this that you should have to wait until they show up with a search warrant when you knew there were investigations going on 18 months ago?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think this is verging on the absurd. The Leader of the Opposition is indicating that I should somehow be going out of my way to determine whether or not there are investigations of any kind taking place at any time regarding any member of my cabinet. The only way we could do that would be to be in touch with those bodies that are conducting those investigations, which would be entirely inappropriate. The best we can do—and I make no apologies for this, I say to the Leader of the Opposition—is to act on reliable information as and when we receive it. That's exactly what we did in these circumstances.

**Mr. Tory:** I say to the Premier, that is precisely the point here. It was disclosed 19 months ago that there were three investigations underway by the RCMP, by the tax authorities and by the Ontario Securities Commission. It was well documented in the press and it was well discussed in this House. You chose to have a standard that said that, notwithstanding the former Minister of Finance's involvement in the companies that were at that time under investigation, you were going to leave him there until you were sure he personally was the subject of an investigation. It's not about him per se; it is about the standard you set to ensure that integrity is maintained in your government at all times.

Would you agree with me that the standard you have followed in this instance, by failing to act 19 months ago, did not maximize to the fullest extent possible the protection of the public interest and may have made a difficult situation even worse, for you, for your government and for the former Minister of Finance?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The Leader of the Opposition may be inclined to be forgetful in this regard, but the fact is that some 18 or 19 months ago, the Integrity Commissioner ruled twice on this issue. He said that then-Minister Sorbara acted appropriately and responsibly and was not in contravention of any rules. I also said at that time that should Minister Sorbara become the subject of an investigation, he would step aside pending the outcome of that investigation.



I am confident that we made the right call some 18 or 19 months ago, given the circumstances as we understood them, bolstered by the Integrity Commissioner's report, just as I am confident of the decision I made just recently, as I am also confident that Minister Sorbara has done and always will do the right thing in the circumstances.

#### HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** Speaker, before I begin, I want to congratulate you on your recent election.

My question is for the Premier. The McGuinty government's lack of a hydroelectricity plan left Ontario teetering on the brink this summer. There were four separate electricity supply warnings. At least twice, Ontario communities experienced brownouts.

Almost a year ago, with much fanfare, your government announced a number of natural gas-fired generating stations. You promised to have those natural gas-fired generating stations up and running by 2007. Premier, can you tell the people of Ontario, has construction started on any of these gas-fired generating stations yet?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'd like to refer this to our brand new Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** Thank you very much, Premier, for referring the question to me, and thank you very much to the member of the third party for asking the question. I am pleased to be able to respond. I will tell you, however, that even my mother would give me a little more time to get caught up to date. Being new to the portfolio, I'm hoping that the member of the third party will be gracious as I manage to answer his question.

In fact, there are a couple of generating opportunities that are there and underway. We're into 9,000 megawatts of new supply that will be put into place by the year 2007, and a number of these initiatives are underway in various stages.

**Mr. Hampton:** If the minister didn't want to answer the question, the Premier shouldn't have referred it. He could have answered it himself.

It was a simple question. I wanted to ask you, has construction begun yet on any of the natural gas generating stations that your government announced with much fanfare almost a year ago? Of course, the answer is no, construction hasn't started. As a result, we don't have, despite your promises, an affordable and reliable electricity supply plan in this province. This summer, your lack of an electricity plan forced industrial consumers like paper mills to pay hydro rates that went through the roof. Paper mills were paying 7.85 cents a kilowatt hour for their electricity. That is much higher than the five cents or 5.8 cents that residential consumers are paying.

So based on what happened to industrial rates this summer, can you tell residential hydro consumers how

much the McGuinty government is going to increase their hydro rate by in 2006? Will it be a 20% increase, a 30% increase? Would you tell hydro consumers that now, please, Minister?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** I thank the member for the question. I find it ironic that somebody who believes so strongly in public consultation and due process and due diligence would not recognize that all these projects have to go through environmental assessments, have to have some problems resolved with their municipalities and have to be able to talk to the constituent base. Instead, I guess he would just like to bypass all these processes and move forward. Unfortunately, that is not the way we work in the McGuinty government. We actually do believe in public consultation, due diligence and due process.

1510

**Mr. Hampton:** My point is that despite your government's promises of an electricity supply plan, we're not in fact going to see any natural gas generating stations providing electricity any time soon, and certainly not by 2007.

But my question was about rates. We know that residential hydro consumers are going to get another big shock from the McGuinty government. The government that promised a hydro rate freeze into 2006 is going to increase hydro rates again, by at least 20%.

In connection with that, though, you overcharged hydro consumers by \$528 million in 2004, and you knew that in February. Yet, since February, you've been hanging on to that money. When are hydro consumers going to get back the \$528 million of their money—not the McGuinty government's money; their money? When are you going to roll out the rebate, Minister?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** I again thank the member for the question. The Ontario electricity commission is in the process of working through that particular issue, and we hope to make that announcement very shortly.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Premier, again: Forest industry communities across northern Ontario are in crisis. Yet, while they're looking for a plan from your government, you make the problem worse by constantly increasing hydroelectricity rates.

Cec Makowski, who is the Ontario president of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada, put it this way today: "Ontario's forest-based industries, tens of thousands of mill workers and dozens of communities across the province are being abandoned by the provincial government at a time of crisis."

"No wonder there is a growing sentiment in the north for separation from Ontario."

Premier, as thousands of mill workers lose their jobs and communities are devastated, where is the McGuinty government's plan for forest industry communities?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I know that the Minister of Natural Resources would like to speak to this, but I want to take the first one, if I may.

First of all, let me say that we understand how important the forestry sector is, not just to the north but to the rest of Ontario, and indeed to our entire economy. We also understand that in this era of globalization, there is a consolidation that is taking place and there are ensuing job losses. That's not just happening here in Ontario, as my friend opposite knows. It's taking place in Quebec, Newfoundland, New Brunswick—indeed throughout the country—and in many other parts of the world. For the first time, for example, we're now competing against Indonesia, South Korea and South America.

In response to that, our minister put together a very solid package, a \$680-million strategy. Part of that is a \$150-million forest sector prosperity fund, which is designed to help the industry in northern Ontario transition into a more innovative, productive industry so that they can be sustainable going forward. So we have done, I would argue, much in order to support the industry in northern Ontario. Is there more to do? Of course there is. But we're proud of the efforts we've made so far.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, you need to know that many of these companies that are closing mills in Ontario are in fact moving production to jurisdictions like Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia. They're very clear: Everything that you and your government have announced so far doesn't address the two fundamental problems. Electricity rates for paper mills in Ontario amount to 30 cents a kilowatt hour under the McGuinty government. Those same companies can operate a mill in Quebec or British Columbia for eight cents a kilowatt hour in electricity costs. Your so-called response doesn't address the problem. In fact, you make the problem worse by constantly raising electricity rates.

In connection with that, Premier, we've just learned that you seem to have a plan for more expensive, unreliable, private nuclear power. It's come to our attention that late tomorrow afternoon your government may announce that you are proceeding with the multi-billion dollar refurbishment of nuclear reactors at the Bruce nuclear plant. The people of Ontario deserve a public debate about this, not an announcement at—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Order.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** It is no secret that our government has been in negotiations for about a year now.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of Cabinet):** We have a tentative agreement.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** We have a tentative agreement in place. That is not a secret, and neither is it a secret that we are up against it when it comes to ensuring we have a sufficient supply of generating capacity in Ontario.

This morning, the new minister was reminding me once again that we have to replace, renew or refurbish some 25,000 megawatts over the course of the next 15 years. It would have been nice had this work been begun some 10 or 15 years ago—but it didn't.

We have already brought some 2,200 megawatts of new energy on line and we have 9,000 more megawatts in the works. What I intend to say to the member

opposite, to the people of Ontario and to the international investment community is that this government will do whatever we have to do to ensure that there is a reliable supply of clean, reasonably priced electricity for the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** I want to quote someone who said something during the election. This person said major government announcements should be made "where they belong, before the people's representatives in the Ontario Legislature." Premier, you know who made that statement: You made it.

You also know that nuclear power is a very contentious issue in Ontario. It's contentious because of the huge cost overruns in the past. The last Liberal government promised Darlington at \$4.7 billion; it came in at \$15 billion. There are also concerns about nuclear waste.

I'm asking the question again: Will any announcement about billion-dollar refurbishments of Bruce nuclear be made here in the Legislature with a public debate, or are you going to try to hide it at 4 o'clock tomorrow afternoon, on a Friday, when no one is looking? Will Dalton McGuinty—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** By way of an interesting contrast in approaches to this, the NDP, when they were in government, made rate increases on December 31, outside of the House. With respect to the negotiations with Bruce Power, we even announced the tentative agreement in this House. That strikes a stunning contrast in terms of openness and transparency.

I want to repeat something I said a moment ago. It is no secret that here in Ontario we lack an adequate supply of electricity. We are doing everything we can to ensure that we have a reliable supply. We've brought some 2,200 new megawatts on line; we have 9,000 more in the works; we have an aggressive conservation plan that we're about to roll out. It's no secret that we have been in negotiations with Bruce Power. Again, I repeat, we will do whatever is necessary to ensure that the people of Ontario have a reliable supply of clean, reasonably priced electricity.

#### RCMP INVESTIGATION

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** Premier, yesterday in a press scrum you indicated that you would continue to seek the advice of the member for Vaughan-King-Aurora despite the member's being the subject of a police investigation. If this is accurate, in what areas and in what manner do you expect to receive advice on a continuing basis from the former Minister of Finance?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I would recommend to my friend opposite that he obtain a transcript of exactly what was said. That was the question. I said that if you're asking me whether or not I would sever my friendship with Greg Sorbara, the answer is no. That is exactly what I said.

**Mr. Wilson:** Premier, you didn't answer the question. Are you going to continue to seek advice and, if so, what



guidelines or post-employment rules or standards are you going to put in place so that it's clear what the rules are for the public, for members, for Mr. Sorbara and for the integrity of your own government?

Would you please answer the question. Are you going to continue to seek his advice, and, if you are, what guidelines or borders are you going to put in place to ensure that that's done appropriately?

1520

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I don't know whether or not the member opposite is suggesting that Mr. Sorbara should be ejected from our caucus, that he should not be permitted to participate in any of our caucus discussions or deliberations. If that is what he is suggesting, then he should state that publicly and in a forthright manner.

Greg Sorbara will continue to play a valuable role as the MPP for his constituency and as a member of our caucus.

### PUBLIC HEALTH

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** For the Premier again. Premier, two more cases of legionnaires' disease have been reported in Scarborough. The cases occurred outside the Seven Oaks Home for the Aged, where 17 people have already died, but you have refused to call a public inquiry.

During Toronto's outbreak of SARS a couple of years ago, you demanded a public inquiry. You said, and I want to quote you, that people "want the assurance that all the tough questions will be asked and answered through a full, independent, objective process." So I'm going to ask you the same question you asked Premier Eves during the SARS outbreak in Toronto. My question to you is, why are you afraid to call for a full, independent public inquiry?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Health, Speaker.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I think it would be appropriate first, on behalf of all members of the Legislature and Ontarians, to repeat what I've had the privilege of saying previously, which is that we send condolences to those who have been touched by loss or by illness. We recognize the incredible hard work of health care providers on-scene in a variety of different places over the last number of weeks. It's been a challenging circumstance, for sure.

I would say to the honourable member that at the heart of his question is a point that I think we can all agree upon, which is that it is imperative in our province that as challenges are uncovered, we seek to learn and apply as quickly as possible all of the lessons that are to be found. We believe that the prudent way to move forward—something that I've indicated as much as almost two weeks ago—is to ask a person of considerable eminence to offer some independent reflection on what went on in a timely fashion.

At the heart of it, what do we have to be afraid of? We have to be afraid that a public inquiry would lead to

delays, which would prevent us from learning and applying the lessons as quickly as is possible. That's the bottom line. You will see us moving forward on this basis in a very short number of days.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, 17 people have died, and more seriously, an outbreak which was supposed to be confined to the home for the aged is now somehow in the broader community.

In an election campaign you told people to choose change, but it would appear that in this kind of situation not much has changed. Public health and public health protection is still underfunded. It still doesn't have the tools or resources it needs to fight major outbreaks like this. During the SARS crisis, you said, "Why is it that you are great when it comes to putting out press releases, but you have yet to move forward and make sure that you actually send money to the people who need it?" and the issues that need it. Now your government is putting public image before public health. When are you going to hold an inquiry to get to the bottom of what is a very, very serious health problem?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** It is an examination of the words in the honourable member's question that I suspect will be disheartening to a lot of people, especially those people of celebrated leadership in our province who have stepped up to the plate and are providing an even greater leadership role as a result of actions of our government.

I'm talking about a chief medical officer of health like Dr. Sheela Basur, the fact that our province has reached out and asked Dr. Don Low from Mount Sinai to also serve as the medical director of the Ontario public health lab, that Toronto Public Health has been led by Dr. David McKeown, an established leader in public health, and that Allison McGeer, one of those courageous people who help to sort through these challenges, has been on the front line. These are the people who have been working on Ontario's behalf, consistent with the view that it is important to have some independent suggestion and review of what went on.

We will be doing that. We will move forward in the next number of days with an eminent Ontarian who'll help us get to the bottom of it, and get to the bottom of it faster. This member suggests that that is the work of lawyers, to be done over a period of time. We rather view the necessity of time, meaning we should move forward quickly and apply all of those lessons as quickly as possible.

### BIRTH CERTIFICATES

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron–Bruce):** I, too, would like to add my congratulations to the Speaker.

My question today is for the Minister of Government Services. I was very pleased yesterday to hear the remarks in the throne speech about birth certificates, but to be frank, the idea that birth certificates will be delivered within 15 days and, if not, the good people of Ontario will get their money back has left me just a little bit sceptical. Birth certificate requests remain one of the



main issues that my constituency office has to deal with. I receive numerous phone calls with regard to the status of the applications. Some can take eight weeks or even longer. Minister, how do you think you can put a money-back guarantee on this service?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** Mr. Speaker, I too congratulate you, and please don't take that out of my time here in responding.

As we said in the speech from the throne yesterday, we very much remain focused on an ever-improving quality of service, and I might say that our public servants very much share that commitment.

Just to provide the member for Huron-Bruce with some comfort, it was in June that we began testing this. For those people who applied on-line for a birth certificate, we were able, within 15 business days, to deliver that birth certificate to them—99.7%; almost 100%. I hope it's some comfort to the member that we have tested this. We will, in the next few weeks, be announcing the details of the money-back guarantee for all on-line applications for birth certificates.

As I say, I'm actually quite proud of this. I think we're the only government in North America that has said that we are going to improve public service and we're going to demonstrate tangibly that we've done it, and if we don't do it, you get your money back. I think that's good for the public.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Minister, that sounds very good. My constituents will be very pleased to hear that. But my constituents want to know why something that used to take six to eight weeks or even longer can now be offered in just 15 business days. What has changed that allows you to respond to on-line birth certificate applications in just 15 days?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** Firstly, I'd say that the public servants who are working in this area have been working very hard, and I give a lot of credit to them. But I would also say that technology is playing a major role here. When you apply on-line, the errors are very negligible. When you fill it in by hand, we run into quite a few errors. When you fill it in on-line, we get it instantly and we begin processing it. So the technology is very helpful here. That's the basic reason why we can guarantee that within 15 business days you will get your birth certificate.

I just repeat: I actually was a bit surprised that the two opposition parties don't like this. I think the public understands that this is a government that's prepared to take a risk. It's a government that's prepared to say that we're going to improve the quality of public service with our public servants, and we're prepared to offer a money-back guarantee.

#### RCMP INVESTIGATION

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** Mr. Speaker, my congratulations to you as well.

My question is to the Premier. I am somewhat acquainted with the burden of integrity that comes with

serving as a minister in the cabinet of Ontario. As you know, I resigned my seat at the cabinet table pending the outcome of an investigation into how a family name of a former young offender was included in a throne speech. To preserve the integrity of my ministry and that of our government, I believe I did the right thing and stepped aside, a move that you vigorously called for in your role as Leader of the Opposition. Premier, why do you not insist on that same standard for ministers in your government?

1530

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I do.

**Mr. Runciman:** There's a different standard from one side of the House to the other, obviously. Nineteen months too late, he agrees.

Premier, this is a simple question about your judgment—and clearly there are more questions about that after today—and the leadership standard you have set for your government. Nineteen months ago, questions were raised about the ability of the former Minister of Finance to continue in his role given serious and now criminal investigations into a company he was involved with before being appointed to your cabinet. You chose not to act then. You chose not to live up to the same standard practised by former governments of all political stripes. Why did you not act then to uphold the highest level of integrity in your government?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I did. The issue that was raised some 18 or 19 months ago, again, was the subject of two separate rulings from the Integrity Commissioner. On both occasions, he ruled that then Minister Sorbara acted responsibly and appropriately and was not in breach of any rules. I also indicated at the time that should Minister Sorbara become the subject of an investigation, he would step aside. That has in fact occurred just recently. That information was brought to my attention and in fact Minister Sorbara has stepped aside. It's as simple and as straightforward as that.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question. The member for Nickel Belt.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** Thank you, Speaker, and my congratulations.

I have a question to the Minister of Health. There are residents of Sarnia and Lambton county here today to protest cuts at Bluewater Health. They are very concerned about the number of proposed layoffs and the cuts to programs and services which have been publicly announced. These cuts will have a serious impact on the number of front-line staff who are available to deliver high-quality care and on the number of programs and services that can actually be provided. My question to you, minister, is, why is your government forcing these cuts at Bluewater Health?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I want to welcome our distinguished

visitors from Sarnia. I had the privilege of being in the Sarnia community in the summertime, at which point I took the opportunity to make note of the fact that our government is very keen to make a significant new investment in Sarnia, in a new hospital, which everybody would agree is long overdue. This would be an investment on top of the \$13 million we have invested in that hospital since we came to office.

The circumstances that we're in are really ones of fairness. We are working on the basis of the view that hospitals should deal relatively equally with the resources they have and provide care consistent with that. We don't find that the situation currently in place at Bluewater is like that. It is a hospital that is operating well beyond the margins of its peer hospitals and, accordingly, it's important that they make efforts to operate on a par with peer hospitals. That's fair to hospitals in Ontario.

We think it's important for the system to help the system. We have had a CEO from an adjoining hospital who has gone to Sarnia and has sought to work with Bluewater Health, to give them some advice around measures they could take to get to this more equitable position.

We recognize it's challenging, and we really do appreciate the work that a variety of people have been undertaking as we seek to make sure that our health care system is sustainable and equal.

**Ms. Martel:** The question is, why is your government forcing these cuts? These cuts are going to have very serious consequences for the community. There will be over 100 full-time equivalent staff people who will receive layoff notices and who will not be able to provide high-quality health care. There are a number of very important services and programs delivered at two sites that are on the chopping block.

People in this community voted Liberal in the last election because your government promised that you would improve health care services, not decimate health care services. These folks are here today because they want you to reverse your decision. They know their community needs enhanced and improved health care, not significant, dramatic, drastic cuts at Bluewater Health. Minister, your government, through your budget process, is directly responsible for the cuts that have been proposed. I ask you again, why are you forcing these devastating cuts at Bluewater Health?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** The honourable member's attempt to characterize all of those changes that might take place in a hospital as front-line are inappropriate, and I don't think they're very reflective of reality.

One of the very significant areas where the peer reviewer felt there was room for improvement in this hospital environment was related to management and supervisory duties. I think it's very important that, as we discuss matters related to making more equal and efficient the operation of our hospitals, we work a little harder to distinguish between those things which are front-line and those things which are not.

In addition, the honourable member asked about investments in the Sarnia community. Let me make two points. The first is that we know there's a palliative care program in Sarnia that they're very proud of, and we are too. I went to the community and said, "In addition to those services being offered in the hospital, we would like to work with Sarnia to bring a residential hospice about," and accordingly, we have a spot in line and we await a community-based proposal. In addition, our government has brought significant new resources to the community care access centre, a satellite of a community health centre, alongside a variety of other community-based government investments. That really is designed to reflect the fact that if we are going to use the word "system" and talk about a health care system, it's important to make investments across the breadth of it. Our \$13 million in new investments at Sarnia Bluewater, a variety of other community investments, and the prospect soon on the horizon of a new residential hospice and a new hospital does represent, I think, very significant investment on the part of our government in the Sarnia community.

#### ANTI-SMOKING PROGRAMS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question. The member for London North Centre.

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and might I say you look very distinguished in your new robes. Congratulations.

My question is for the new Minister of Health Promotion. The health hazards of smoking are no longer a mystery. We know that cigarettes have a serious and sometimes fatal effect on a person's health. We know that many smokers begin to smoke at a very young age. Today, 30% of young people say they smoke regularly—an astonishing number. Not only is this a very expensive habit, but it's a very dangerous one. I know we've made it more difficult for young people to obtain cigarettes, and we've imposed harsh penalties on vendors who sell cigarettes to minors, but we need to do more to convince young people not to pick up this deadly habit.

Minister, what is your plan to curb smoking among Ontario's youth? How will you be addressing this issue in the months to come? What specific initiatives will you be undertaking to keep people from taking up the habit of smoking?

**The Speaker:** Minister of Health Promotion.

**Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):** Thank you very much, and congratulations, Mr. Speaker.

I thank my honourable friend from London North Centre and congratulate her on the front benches.

We all know the challenges young people face, the temptations they face. We also know that 16,000 people a year die of tobacco-related injuries; 44 every day. Many of these people begin smoking in university, and that's why I was very pleased to join the honourable member from St. Catharines at Brock University, which originated a program called Leave the Pack Behind. It has been



a very successful program. I was pleased to be able to announce \$600,000 in funding to expand that program to five additional campuses, to bring the total now to 18 campuses. This program is reaching 250,000 university students, and in its first year the program has had a tremendous degree of success compared to other programs that have been offered. Let me just give you one statistic: 13% of the smokers using the program have quit—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. You may want to put some of that in the supplementary.

**Ms. Matthews:** Minister, let's hope those initiatives go a long way to curb smoking addiction among young people. But what about people who have already become addicted? At any given time, 80% of smokers say they're trying to quit, but we know that few are actually successful in that. So how does a smoke-free Ontario campaign address the millions of Ontarians who are smokers now but are looking for programs to help them quit?

**Hon. Jim Watson:** This is a government that takes this issue seriously, and I commend the Minister of Health for initiating the smoke-free Ontario legislation. I'm very proud to now be the minister responsible for that important piece of legislation.

The strategy has \$50 million attached to it that was announced in Mr. Sorbara's budget, and that's the first time we've had comprehensive and a significant amount of new resources to battle the tobacco industry through prevention, cessation and protection of those exposed to second-hand smoke.

1540

Earlier today, I had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Rob Cushman, the former medical officer of health for the city of Ottawa, along with Garfield Mahood, from the Non-Smokers' Rights Association, and a young gentleman named Shaine Peters who has been very instrumental in a program called Exposé, a program run by young people for young people to encourage them not to start smoking and to quit smoking. It's a successful program, and it's something I'm very proud that the McGuinty government has put at the forefront of the health promotion agenda in this province.

#### RCMP INVESTIGATION

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** Mr. Speaker, let me add my congratulations to you on your new position.

My question is for the Premier. Premier, the situation you now find yourself in with respect to the former Minister of Finance did not just begin with the RCMP search warrant. Sadly, that's when you finally acted. Serious questions were first raised about 19 months ago. I ask you, why did you not put the integrity of your government first and act 19 months ago to meet the burden and the test of leadership that comes with your job?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I place a great deal of

confidence in the Integrity Commissioner. The member opposite may not. To repeat myself, on two separate occasions he ruled back then, some 18 or 19 months ago, that Minister Sorbara had acted responsibly and appropriately and was not in breach of any rules.

I also indicated at the time that should it become apparent that Minister Sorbara was the subject of investigation, he would step aside pending the outcome of that investigation. That's essentially what has happened, and I'm not really sure what the member opposite or the party opposite hopes to gain by pursuing this line of questioning.

**Mrs. Witmer:** Well, I can tell you, Premier, that I was a member of a cabinet where members did step aside. In fact, it was what the Premier of the day expected them to do. They did this in order to ensure the integrity of their office and of the government.

Nineteen months ago, there were very serious questions raised about your finance minister's possible involvement in the activities that were being investigated by the RCMP, the Ontario Securities Commission and the federal tax authorities. I ask you again, Premier, why did you not live up to the same standards that we have come to expect of Premiers in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, the Integrity Commissioner ruled on this twice in the past. It was recently brought to Minister Sorbara's attention that he was the subject of an investigation. That made it obvious, I think, to all of us that the appropriate thing to do in the circumstances was for him to step aside, which is what he did.

#### PAROLE SYSTEM

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Thank you, Speaker. I add my congratulations, and I want you to know that if you need help maintaining order, I'm just a phone call away.

A question to the Premier: How does your government's shutting down of Ontario probation and parole and terminating Ontario's probation and parole officers make Ontario's communities safer?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I think the member opposite knows no final decisions have been made. I think he also understands that we have a shared responsibility to explore efficiencies wherever we could. He may also know that we're one of only three provinces, I think, that operate their own independent parole and probation officer regime. So, yes, we are talking to the federal government and exploring whether or not these services might be consolidated in one level of government. We think we owe that to Ontario taxpayers. And of course, we're also committed to doing this to ensure that we do not compromise, in any way, public safety.

**Mr. Kormos:** I'd suggest that what you owe to Ontario taxpayers is to maintain the high quality of supervision that Ontario's probation and parole officers conduct over convicted criminals.



Why would the province, a province of 12 million people, want to relinquish control over the standards set for the parole board in terms of release on parole and over the levels of supervision required of probation officers to a National Parole Board which, with all due respect, has a rather spotty record?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Look, I understand where the member opposite is coming from on this, and he has a different perspective. He doesn't think that we should ever enter into any negotiations with any other level of government at any time that might result in job losses in the Ontario public service.

First of all, let me say that we have the highest possible regard for Ontario's public servants. Let me say secondly that we also have an obligation to co-operate and coordinate with other levels of government, where that makes sense to do so, on behalf of the people that we are all privileged to serve. So we are, in fact, having discussions with the federal government, and we will continue to explore the possibility that we might transfer responsibility entirely for parole and probation to the federal government. But again, we will do so in a way that does not compromise public safety, and we will also do so in a way that ensures that we can minimize job losses, in fact, if any must occur.

#### EARTHQUAKE IN SOUTH ASIA

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** Speaker, I too congratulate you on assuming your new role.

My question today is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Mike Colle. Minister, as you are aware, South Asia, Afghanistan, India and particularly Pakistan were hit by a devastating 7.6 Richter scale earthquake. I'm sorry to have to report to this chamber that the death toll now exceeds 40,000 and is rising. There are whole districts in Pakistan, for example, in which all the children have been wiped out.

Minister, I ask on behalf of all Ontarians, but particularly on behalf of the 500,000 Canadians of South Asian origin who reside in our province who are reeling from this event, myself included, what has been the government of Ontario's response?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I want to thank the member from Etobicoke North for the question and also thank him for his expression of hope and his hard work in helping his constituents who have been directly affected by this devastation. I know his own extended family and friends in the South Asian community have been affected, so I know how personal this is to him, his father and his mother, and to all his friends and relatives.

I want to say that I've been so impressed by the response that your community in Etobicoke North and the general South Asian community has undertaken. It's really as I said, remarkable.

We, as the government of Ontario, are trying to partner with the federal government to ensure that all the resources available from our government are used in co-

operation with the federal response. We've got two of the best front-line people in Ontario working daily in ensuring that all the resources of all of our ministries are available. The Commissioner of Emergency Management, Julian Fantino, and also the chief medical officer of health of Ontario, Dr. Sheela Basrur, are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Qaadri:** Minister, Ontarians of South Asian origin are mourning the loss of friends and relatives and loved ones, while others wait for news of those missing. How have you reached out to the local South Asian community in this time of need?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** I have been at community events. I think I was at one with you in Mississauga with ICNA, one of the community-based organizations. I've been to a number of very impressive mosques in the last couple of evenings during Ramadan, where I've tried to express the condolences of all of us in this Legislature and our government and our offer of support.

We have indicated that we have already donated \$1 million. We are going to continue to work in partnership with them and to let all of Ontario know that we have to share in our efforts to help our South Asian friends and colleagues and fellow citizens. So this is a continual outreach that we'll do, to encourage everyone to please be generous, as the South Asian community has been so remarkably generous.

1550

#### RCMP INVESTIGATION

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** My question is also for the Premier. The former Minister of Finance has enjoyed special access to you as your senior adviser, your most trusted cabinet minister. Have you broached the subject with him about how the rules of that engagement must change, and can you let this House and the people of Ontario know that the access to yourself and the cabinet is different as a result of his resignation?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Again, Mr. Sorbara remains, hopefully, a very active member of our caucus and a representative of his constituency. In that capacity, he will be participating in all areas characteristic of those responsibilities of a member of provincial Parliament. Obviously, he will not be participating in cabinet deliberations.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** The people of Ontario expect that the integrity of government is of the highest priority and it is your responsibility to give them comfort in that regard. Premier, the question is not about Mr. Sorbara, who is the subject of a criminal investigation. It is about your clear rules and your judgment. Have you set the rules to ensure that the integrity of this government is beyond reproach and the people of Ontario can be comfortable that access is not as it was before?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I am confident that the people of Ontario will bring a very objective and fair approach

to what has taken place here. I think what they will want to take into account is that some 18 or 19 months ago, when the issue first arose, the Integrity Commissioner ruled on two separate occasions that then-Minister Sorbara acted both appropriately and responsibly and was not in breach of any rules. They will also understand that at that time I indicated very clearly that should Minister Sorbara become the subject of an investigation, he would step aside pending the outcome of that investigation. They will also understand that when I received that information just recently, I acted within just a matter of hours to ensure that Minister Sorbara had stepped aside and that we had shuffled the cabinet so that we were ready once again to begin to do the people's work. I think the people of Ontario will judge that to be fair and balanced and responsible.

### RESPITE CARE

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. In our community, we have an organization, as in other communities, called Access Better Living. One of the services they provide is respite care for families of children who have autism. When parents have to care for those children, you know very well that at times they need a break and we need to give respite care to those families. These families, six months into the budget of Access Better Living's fiscal year, have been told that their services are now going to be rationed to 49 hours of respite care for the next six months.

My question to you, Minister, is a very simple one: Are you prepared to make sure that your colleague and yourself work in order to put the money back into the budget of Access Better Living so they can provide full services to those families in need?

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** I very much appreciate the question, and we can discuss after question period whether it's specifically between me and the minister for children.

What we are doing is working together in our development services. As you know, I've been fairly non-partisan, if that's possible, on this issue, because every government of every political stripe has ensured that each year the amount of support that goes into this sector to care for people with developmental disabilities grows. That has just been our history—the NDP government, as well as the Conservatives, and certainly ours. We have set records in this last two years for the amount of investment that we've made in developmental services.

As to the specifics, I'm happy to address that after the next question. I can tell you that we are committed to see that people with developmental disabilities get the care and support they need.

**Mr. Bisson:** First of all, the other minister who was at estimates, the Minister of Children and Youth Services, said that there was no rationing. I come to this House today and I'm telling you there is. Families in our

community are being told they are going to be rationed services for the rest of this fiscal year, to a total of 49 hours' service for the rest of the six months. There are some families to date who have had to take as much as 700 hours of respite care because of the current situation they find themselves in. But I'm also somewhat shocked that between the two ministers they can't figure out who's in charge. Maybe that's part of the problem. So I'm going to put the question directly to you. What we need is an increase in the budget from your ministry, community and social services, to the budgets of Access Better Living. My question simply is this: Are you prepared to say in this House today, "Yes, we'll make sure that agency has the money necessary to provide these much-needed services to the families in need"?

**Hon. Ms. Pupatello:** Thank you once again for the question. I can tell you that this Ministry of Community and Social Services, through our regional offices, gets very involved through those offices in the specific amounts that will go to all of our agencies across the province.

I will tell this individual member, though, that we have never had such an historic investment in developmental services as we have had in these last two years. It began more than a year ago with a \$110-million investment, which also included the closure of the remaining three institutions, but a huge amount of money going into our community with that announcement. That was followed up by a \$41-million investment, which includes the development and enhancement of specialized services for people at extreme high risk with developmental services. In addition to that, and most recently, three months ago, a \$59-million investment, which was also across the board for the foundations program for children who are aging out of high school, to enhancing special services at home—a significant investment, one-time.

Let me tell—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. The time for oral questions has now expired.

### PETITIONS

#### OPTOMETRISTS

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** It's a pleasure to have the first, and congratulations to you as well, Speaker.

I have a petition from the Ontario Association of Optometrists that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the last funding agreement between the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ontario Association of Optometrists (OAO) expired March 31, 2000; and

"Whereas the optometric fees for OHIP-insured services remain unchanged since 1989; and

"Whereas the lack of any fee increase for 15 years has created a crisis situation for optometrists; and



"Whereas fees for OHIP services do not provide for fair or reasonable compensation for the professional services of optometrists, in that they no longer cover the costs of providing eye examinations; and

"Whereas it is in the best interest of patients and the government to have a new funding agreement for insured services that will ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are able to receive the eye care that they need;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care resume negotiations immediately with the OAO and appoint a mediator to help with the negotiation process in order to ensure that optometrists can continue to provide quality eye care services to patients in Ontario."

I'm pleased to also recognize optometrist Daryl Workman, whom I visited this past week.

### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that's been signed by 22,000 residents of Sarnia and Lambton county, residents who are very concerned about the cuts that have been proposed at Bluewater Health. It reads as follows.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Could you sit down just for a second. The member for Halton, I can't see the member for Nickel Belt.

Member for Nickel Belt.

**Ms. Martel:** Thank you, Speaker.

The petition that's been signed by 22,000 residents reads as follows:

"Whereas we are the residents covered by the local health integration network (LHINs);

"Whereas we are the taxpayers covered under Bluewater Health Sarnia;

"Whereas we are the health care providers and users;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to rescind layoffs and re-instate all services to Bluewater Health, slated to be eliminated by December 2005.

"We denounce the reduction of health care services and the closure of the palliative care unit that will directly compromise the well-being of this community."

I agree with the petitioners. I'd like to thank Claudette Drapeau of SEIU in particular for making sure all the signatures came in.

1600

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly from the Credit Valley Hospital and it reads as follows:

"Whereas on August 22, 2005, the government of Ontario, through the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal, announced that

the Credit Valley Hospital's phase 2 expansion project will proceed, with construction starting in 2007; and

"Whereas the new A and H blocks at Credit Valley Hospital will dramatically improve service and care to the approximately 4,800 babies delivered each year at the Credit Valley Hospital, improving a facility designed to handle 2,700 births annually; and

"Whereas the expanded capacity will expedite the movement of acutely ill admitted emergency patients on to a nursing unit where they will be cared for in a timely and professional manner, decrease wait times for surgical patients requiring in-patient care, and also motivate local donors to support our community's hospital;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Credit Valley Hospital, its staff, patients, donors and community thank the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal for the government of Ontario's solid commitment to the care and well-being of the growing municipalities served by the Credit Valley Hospital in western Mississauga."

I wholeheartedly support this. It was my pleasure and privilege to announce phase 2. I have signed it, and I'm going to ask page Mandy to carry it for me.

### CORMORANTS

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I know this is a very important issue to Manitoulin as well.

"Whereas cormorant populations in the Great Lakes basin have increased to over 450,000 birds in the past several years, are continuing to grow, and are significantly depleting fish populations; and

"Whereas numerous scientific studies have clearly shown the serious negative impact on fish stocks and freshwater habitats; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources continues to study the impact of cormorants and possible management strategies; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources has committed to experimental control of cormorants at specific sites;

"Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the government of Ontario and the Ministry of Natural Resources to immediately begin to significantly reduce cormorant populations in areas where they are having a demonstrably negative impact on local fisheries through managed culls."

I affix my signature in full support.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Consideration of the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.



**Mr. Bruce Crozier (Essex):** I move, seconded by Ms. Matthews, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To the Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Crozier moves, seconded by Ms. Matthews, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable James K. Bartleman:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us."

The member for Essex.

**Mr. Crozier:** Thank you, Speaker, and may I too begin by adding my public congratulations to you on your election as Speaker of this great House. I enjoyed working with you in the campaign to that end. I want to point out too that I will be sharing the time for my remarks with Ms. Matthews, the member for London North Centre.

I want to say that on behalf of the people I represent in the riding of Essex, it's my privilege and indeed my honour to move the adoption of the speech from the throne from the government led by Premier Dalton McGuinty. This is a traditional honour, and I want to give a little background, before I get into the actual throne speech, of what it is we're doing here today: what the throne speech is, what it means, and where we go from here.

The motion you just heard on the introduction uses rather archaic language, calling the members "loyal subjects" of the Queen. The wording reflects the long history of the speech from the throne and the debate that follows it. Yesterday, the Lieutenant Governor, the monarch's representative at the provincial level, read the speech from the throne. But the words are not those of the Lieutenant Governor. They are not the words, therefore, of the monarch. The contents of the speech are, in fact, written by the government.

The monarch's representative started reading the speech from the throne during medieval times, when monarchs called Parliament whenever they wanted to and dictated their wishes to Parliament and to its members, or appointed someone to do that job for them. By the 18th century, however, the "King's speech," as it was known, contained the government's words and not those of the monarch. And although monarchs or their representatives might have read them, they didn't necessarily agree with what was being said.

In one rather humorous instance that I would like to recall for you, in 1756 an industrious printer published a fake speech from the throne and was arrested for having

done so. King George II remarked on that incident: "I hope the fellow's punishment will be light, for I have read both speeches, the real and the false, and so far as I understand them, I liked the printer's speech better than my own."

With that, my colleague and I will have some comments—and there will be several days of debate following this—on the throne speech that was given yesterday by the Lieutenant Governor. I want to say at the outset that we are at the midpoint of this government's mandate, and that it continues to work on the economic advantages that we feel the province of Ontario provides in this great land of ours, Canada. We recognize that everything—the ability of our businesses to compete, our capacity to fund a caring society, our need to have opportunities available for children—depends on the prosperity of this province. That's why we're working with Ontarians to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage, by strengthening the educational skills of our young people, improving the health of all our people, and working to foster innovation and leveraging our diversity in getting the fundamentals right. The positive results we've seen over the past two years, from the higher test scores in our schools to shorter wait times in our hospitals to over 193,000 new jobs, are the products of Ontarians working hard, working well and working together.

Now is the time, we feel, to accelerate this progress, and now is the time to strengthen Ontario's economic advantage. What are those advantages? To begin with, smaller class sizes in early grades and higher test scores in our schools will be followed by new legislation that will make it mandatory for young people to keep learning in a classroom, in apprenticeship or in a workplace training program until the age of 18, instead of allowing them to drop out of school at the age of 16. Also, a new alternative high school diploma will recognize the importance of learning a skill or trade. The government is implementing its Reaching Higher plan for post-secondary education, which will invest \$6.2 billion more in universities and colleges, apprenticeships and skilled programs. The government is also carrying out Best Start, which will equip Ontario's youngest learners as they begin school.

#### 1610

Part of that economic advantage, we understand—particularly in the automotive industry, where there's competition from around the world—is our health care system. Dramatic increases in the number of CT scans, cancer surgeries, cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures, hip and knee replacements and MRI scans will continue to produce shorter wait times for patients.

Shortly, patients and prospective patients, those who need care, will be able to see what wait times are at hospitals across this province. When you think about it, how can you imagine that we can have what we would call a health care system if up until now we've never had any ability to track wait times? What we are saying is that by doing this, by setting the point from which we start and the standards we're going toward, we will be

able to judge and be judged as a government by the way we've invested your health care money and how it has affected those wait times.

We must also improve the level of care for patients and ensure that medicare is strong enough to care for Ontarians for generations to come. That's why, when I mentioned wait times for key medical procedures, there are going to be 8% more CT scans, 11% more cancer surgeries, 16% more cataract surgeries, 17% more cardiac care procedures, 28% more hip and knee replacements and 42% more MRI scans. These represent some of the largest increases ever in our health care system by any government. Your government will work with medical experts to spell out the appropriate length of wait times for these procedures, how long that wait really is and how much progress is being made when it comes to reducing those wait times.

I want to talk a little bit about innovation in this 21st century that we are rapidly coming into. It seems to me it was only five years ago that we celebrated the turn of the century.

**Mr. Mario Sergio (York West):** Wasn't it?

**Mr. Crozier:** Isn't that amazing? My point is how quickly those five years have passed and how much has happened in those five years.

To ensure that Ontario is the first to discover new ideas, turn them into products and services and market them to the world, the government is bolstering research and development while making strategic investments in innovation in key sectors of Ontario's economy.

These investments include the auto sector, which has announced \$4.5 billion worth of investment in Ontario over the past two years; the agri-food sector, which is important to me in Essex county, with the greenhouse industry, the grain and oilseeds producers, the fresh vegetable producers and of course where the best tomatoes in the world are grown. The agri-food sector has benefited from support for beef farmers hurt by a US ban on Canadian beef and from the government's plan to require that gas include ethanol.

The forestry sector is receiving more than \$680 million from the province to help modernize it for the 21st century. As the Premier said today, the forest industry is not only key in northern Ontario but it certainly affects the lives and standards of all Ontarians.

This is why the government moved quickly to deliver assistance to the cattle farmers affected by the ban, why it continues to act on concerns regarding the Canadian agricultural income stabilization program and why it's requiring an average of 5% ethanol in all gasoline sold in Ontario by January 2007. We want to create new markets for our farmers, clean up our air and provide a hedge against volatile gasoline prices.

Beginning with the Premier's agri-food summit, your government is working with leaders in this sector to develop a common vision for the future. At this point, we are focusing on three priorities in the agri-food industry:

—Innovation: Your government will support research and development that helps create new markets and ways of doing business in agri-food.

—Marketing Ontario food: Your government will work with the industry to develop a new branding and marketing strategy.”

I can say that in my own area of Essex county there are ads out right now for tomatoes grown in greenhouses and for mushroom farms—we have two mushroom farms in our riding. The government can help with branding, marketing and promotion in these two areas to make those products in even more demand. I go to a mushroom farm and find that upwards of 80% of its product is shipped to the United States. Those of us down in the Windsor-Essex area know that when we see Meijer stores, a huge retailer in Michigan—our mushrooms are being shipped over to Michigan every day.

The third area we are emphasizing:

—Farm income: Ontario is working with the federal government to improve our system of safety nets.”

I want to say that, with a \$15-million increase in the agriculture minister's budget over last year, we recognize the need to support our farm groups. That isn't to say we probably won't be met with challenges in that sector. The rural caucus of the government meets regularly, and we meet with farm producers regularly, so that when any challenges come up that we are not expecting, we will be able to meet and act on their behalf.

We, as a government and as a province, want to leverage our diversity. We are a diverse province. We are a province that is made up of individuals and citizens from around the world. It's because of this diversity that we are, in fact, so strong. We want to diversify into jobs and investment by attracting the best and the brightest from around the world and helping them settle and integrate into our economy.

The government is expanding training programs and English-as-a-second-language instruction. Funding is available because of the Premier's campaign to narrow that \$23-billion gap between what Ontarians contribute to the federal government and what they get back in programs and services.

Ontario will ensure timely access to professions and trades for qualified professionals trained outside of Canada by ensuring that regulatory bodies create a fair and transparent registration and appeals process.

Ontario's drive to tell its diversity story to the world will include the Premier's trade mission to China next month.

Our government, in my view, remains focused on ensuring and ever improving the quality of service to Ontarians. This commitment is shared by a public service that is truly second to none and one that demonstrates each day an exemplary work ethic and unqualified professionalism. Working with them, your government will unveil what is believed to be the first money-back public service guarantee in North America.

You know that part of the reason we're here—in fact, a big part of the reason we're here—is simply to serve Ontarians, not only in the areas of health care, education, transportation and community services, but just to service some of those everyday needs of our constituents. Later



this year, Ontarians will fill out birth certificate applications on-line and get their certificate within 15 days, or they'll get their money back. The minister said today that he will announce very shortly how that will work and how we intend to make it work. We also look forward to announcing other types of services that will be delivered with a money-back guarantee. As the Premier has often said, we live in a 100-channel world today. The Internet is more and more becoming part of our everyday lives. We have to look at technology; we have to use technology to our benefit. That's what we're looking at here.

1620

Another area that was mentioned in the throne speech, that I know has been brought to my attention by my constituents, is the Drive Clean program. The Drive Clean program was started some years ago by a former government for a very good reason; that is, because of the smog from air pollution of cars that we suffer from in Ontario—those hot, muggy summer days when all the vehicles on the road contribute to pollution. What was done was that the Drive Clean program was put in place and emission tests were given to vehicles of certain ages. What we are finding is that some vehicles—in fact, more than 99% of vehicles; those cars that are, of course, newer than some others that are on the road—are passing their emission test. What we plan to do is reform the Drive Clean program to the end that we use the money spent on it by Ontarians in its most effective way, and that is to get to the cars that are doing the most polluting.

**Mr. Sergio:** Dirty cars.

**Mr. Crozier:** Dirty cars, it's been mentioned—and that's exactly what it is. So we're going to look at the Drive Clean program and modify that program where we feel it's necessary from the experience we have had up till now.

I remind driving constituents in the province of Ontario that when it comes to automobiles—they're a necessary part of our lives, a necessary part of our economy; they're a driver, if I may use that word, in the economy. But in having to have those cars of ours on the road, automobile insurance rates have been an issue over the last few years. I'm pleased to say that we have successfully brought auto insurance rates down by an average of 11%, and it's assumed that those rates may be reduced even more. My colleague Mr. Mike Colle, now the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, had an awful lot to do with our success.

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** With good advice from my MPP colleagues.

**Mr. Crozier:** Your government will continue to implement the most sweeping and comprehensive changes to Ontario's consumer protection laws in more than 30 years, including stronger enforcement and larger fines. Again, I emphasize that we're here to serve the people of Ontario. There is really no other reason for me to have this seat, or for any of my colleagues to be in this Legislature, if it's not to serve the citizens of the province of Ontario, and we have to continue to strive to do a better job at that.

But we don't do it alone. You know, Ontarians have worked along with us to reduce the deficit from some \$5.6 billion to around \$1.6 billion. The work of my colleague and seatmate, the member for Vaughan—King—Aurora, Greg Sorbara, had an awful lot to do with that. The province also, under the guidance of Minister Caplan, launched a five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan which includes roads, public transit, hospitals and infrastructure. I want to tell the folks back in Essex that when it comes to infrastructure, Minister Caplan and Minister Takhar in particular are interested in our concerns about the Highway 3 bypass, and I will continue to work with those two ministers so that we soon see improvements on that highway—not to say, though, or not to diminish the fact that there is more work being done on Highway 401 through the riding of Essex than I can recall since Highway 401 was even brought down that far.

In just two years the government has brought more than 2,200 megawatts of electricity on-line, and projects that we will deliver another 9,000 megawatts as part of our plan for a reliable supply of clean energy at a reasonable cost.

Consumers can look forward to getting smart meters that will help them save money by telling them when they can pay less. I hope all consumers of electricity have listened to the now Minister of Energy, Donna Cansfield, and are doing their part in conserving: changing to those light bulbs in their homes that take less electricity and turning that light off when it isn't needed.

It's a bit of a joke around my house, and our children remind me of it constantly. When I was younger, I was a junior power warden. We had a little card and a little button. My job around the house when I was a kid was to make sure that all the unnecessary use of electricity was looked at, to turn those lights off. Our lovely kids had to grow up with that legacy I've left, and I hope now to be able to teach it to my little granddaughter Emma and grandsons Adam and Benjamin. Grandpa is now a senior power warden and I'm trying to make them junior power wardens.

The government will offer Ontarians, as I said earlier, the first money-back guarantee if we don't deliver on some of these services.

The government's drive to form effective partnerships with the private sector and other levels of government includes less paperwork for small business and continuing gas tax money for public transit. We're the first provincial government in history to give gas tax money to municipalities for transit.

Of course, it's of interest to a small-urban, rural member like me that the largest city in our province functions well and functions as a driver in our economy. This government is working on the introduction of a new City of Toronto Act and legislation that would treat all municipalities with respect.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Crozier:** I'm surrounded by friends here who appreciate that.



There it is, folks: A throne speech that said "strengthening Ontario's economic advantage," and the ways we can do it. If you think about it, that's what we're here to do. When you think about health care and the advantage it gives us over even our closest neighbour when it comes to production and costs of manufacturing, when you think of education, when you have the brightest and the best and you give them the best education you can, it's for all our benefit.

I get the question every once in a while: "Why should I pay education tax? I don't have any children in school any more. They're grown," and so forth. Well, somebody paid for our education when we were younger and, in growing up, we paid for part of our own education. I know our children worked when they went to university. Among ourselves and our family, we were able to educate two bright young children through university. My point is that we have to continue to do that. Just because we're older and maybe don't access the education system any more, I want to be there for my grandchildren, for your grandchildren and for everybody else. We need to emphasize that we need bright, well-educated young people in our province.

Transportation is another area that is an integral part of the economy we have today. We have to have a good transportation system.

I could go down the line with each of the ministers and the ministerial posts we have and say that it all really contributes to a growing, healthy economy, and that's what it's all about. In the next two years we're going to see this economy grow like it's never grown before and we're all going to be there working on behalf of hard-working Ontarians.

Now I would like my colleague from London North Centre, Ms. Matthews, to have a few words.

1630

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** I'm honoured to have the opportunity to second the speech from the throne delivered yesterday by our treasured Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable James Bartleman. What an extraordinary man he is.

Yesterday the Lieutenant Governor began his speech by thanking those who have made his book drive a success. This book drive collected well over a million books from Ontarians for Ontarians that were distributed in schools in our most northern communities, schools where there were bookshelves but no books.

I'm told that when the boxes of books were delivered in the remote towns and villages it was difficult to get them from the trucks to the schools because the kids were so anxious to see what books were inside the boxes. They were thirsty for the knowledge, the ideas and the stories that were contained in those boxes.

In my own riding of London North Centre over 35,000 books were collected. I would like to echo the Lieutenant Governor's thanks for the generosity of all those in my riding who joined in the spirit of the campaign and donated books they had read so others could read.

I especially want to thank the staff, the students and the community of St. Mark school, led by their wonderful

principal, Marg Clendenning, and of St. Mary Choir school, led by their dedicated principal, Kathy Fraumeni, and a special thank you to John Simcoe and his friends at St. Michael's school, Labourers' Union Local 1059 and so many others who made this such an overwhelming success.

Lieutenant Governor James Bartleman, the inspiration behind the campaign, the person whose actions produced this outpouring of generosity, I say to you, sir, thank you, merci, meegwetch. You have done more for the people of the province than you could ever imagine, and I applaud your newest initiatives to reduce the number of suicides among native children. If anyone can tackle this issue, you can. Your understanding, your imagination, your optimism—you have within you the unbeatable combination of traits that are required to address a problem of this depth.

Now I'd like to turn my attention to the initiatives contained in the throne speech, and I'm going to touch on a few that I think are especially important to me and to my constituency.

Clearly the intention of the government is to make sure that our economy is strong so that people enjoy a high quality of life, and that there is money to spend on social services, on health care, on education. It's our intention to continue to move toward our stated goal of rebuilding and restoring the services in Ontario that make this the finest place there is in the world.

We've made a remarkable turnaround over the past two years, but there is still much to do to rebuild and restore our education system, to fix our health care system and to lay the foundation for economic prosperity for future generations. We will do all this within the context of being good stewards of our environment and good stewards of our fiscal situation, ensuring that we leave for our children cleaner water and cleaner air, less burdened by the debt of previous generations.

We are not content with merely returning to past excellence in Ontario. We are determined to reach even higher, to accelerate our progress, to address issues of social inequality, to open doors to whom in the past the doors have been locked shut, to ensure that everyone in Ontario has the opportunity to be the best they can be, to maximize the human potential in each one of us. We all benefit when that happens; we all lose when it doesn't.

We all know that a good education is the foundation for a good future, but for many in Ontario, the barriers to a good, successful education are insurmountable. So they drop out of school at alarming rates before attaining the accreditation that is so important in today's job market, and then have no option but to struggle in low-paid, sporadic employment with no benefits and no job security, to access social assistance when they can't find work, to try to balance their precarious financial situation, deciding whether to pay the rent or feed the kids.

This throne speech reviews the steps we've already taken to lower some of those barriers to education and sets out the steps that we will take in this session to lower them further. We will lower the barriers to learning for

our youngest children, for those at risk of dropping out, for those for whom the financial barriers to post-secondary education are prohibitive, for those for whom systemic barriers mean that entire groups of people in this population are grossly under-represented in our post-secondary institutions, and for newcomers to Canada with the potential to prosper in their chosen country.

Starting with our youngest Ontarians, the Best Start program will make high-quality child care and early learning opportunities accessible for thousands of low- and middle-income families. It will also fund 25,000 new child care spaces and assistance so children arrive at school ready and eager to learn, to be the best they can be, to reach as high as they are able to reach.

Once they get to school, they will benefit from smaller class sizes in JK to grade 3. Already, 2,100 schools have smaller class sizes because we made it a priority to hire 2,400 new teachers.

I talked with one of those teachers in London just the other day. He told me what a difference smaller class sizes make for the students in his classroom. He told me how he is now able to teach every one of his students, to ensure that each one is keeping up, to make sure that each one has grasped the content, that they're getting the personal attention that young people need to build a strong foundation for future success. He contrasted his teaching experience this year with that of previous years, and he told me that our government has already made a real, lasting difference in the lives of his young students.

We will continue toward our goal of having our youngest students in class sizes of 20 or less by 2007-08, because we know it's the right thing to do for the children. We know that, in time, that investment will make a real difference to the economic prosperity of this province, because our prosperity depends on having a well-educated, highly skilled workforce.

We're going to make our progress on this important initiative accessible and transparent through a Web site that will provide information on class sizes in each school, and across the province. Parents, teachers and students will be able to see for themselves how we are keeping this promise of lower class sizes in the early years.

We're committed to having more children doing better in math and literacy by age 12, an age where kids start to firm up their goals and dreams for their futures, when they start formulating ideas about how smart they are and about how high they can reach.

We've already made progress on this front. We've hired hundreds of specialist teachers in literacy and numeracy, trained thousands more and provided new textbooks and library books for our schools. We've established a Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat to focus exclusively on this challenge. Test scores are moving higher, and we fully expect these new investments will pay off in even higher test scores in the future.

We must accelerate that progress, and one of the ways we will do that is by expanding community involvement in our schools. Volunteers, businesses and non-profit

organizations can and should play an important role in supporting teachers, parents and the others already devoting their lives to students. We will do a better job of tapping into that potential in our communities.

I'm delighted to introduce the Legislature to my mother, Joyce Matthews, who's with us in the gallery today. My mother is an example of how volunteers can make a real difference. She has volunteered her entire life, much of it with Frontier College. It was during her time at Frontier College that she pioneered the establishment of reading circles, of which there are now thousands. She worked in community centres and recruited volunteers to come with her to read to kids in Regent Park. One of those volunteers was a young man named George Smitherman. He's done well for himself. The kids at Regent Park called my mom "the book lady," and they looked forward to her arrival with her bag of books and her warm smile. Many of these kids had never before owned a book until she gave them one to take home.

I know that there are adults today who read because of my mom's work as a volunteer when they were kids. In fact, I met one of those people a while ago in London; she had also volunteered at Wheable school in London. This fellow told me what a difference my mom had made to him graduating from high school. She worked with him learning to read. I was quite moved by what he had to say about her. Then he charged me \$150 to fix my computer. It took him about 10 minutes to do that. So I think she taught him well.

1640

I know that there are lots more like my mom out there in Ontario, people who would be delighted to read with kids, who might not have anyone else to read with them. We are going to work to tap into that potential.

Another initiative I'm very happy about is the new alternative diploma. I've spent some time at a school in my riding called Sir George Ross Secondary School. It's a school that's specially designed for kids who have trouble in the regular academic schools. These kids go from school into the trades. The principal, Len Bartholomew, very passionately explained to me how currently his students, who are perfectly capable of and anxious to learn a trade, are prevented from doing that, prevented from entering apprenticeship programs, because their skills are not in the area we test for in order to graduate from high school. So because they currently are not able to get that graduation diploma from high school, they cannot enter apprenticeship trades. We have set up a big barrier for these students. They cannot move forward under the current situation. Now they will have their chance to be the best they can be. That's a good move for them, and it's a good move for our economy.

On the post-secondary front, one of the most exciting developments for me is tuition grants for low-income students. These are not loans; these are grants—grants that will cover their tuition costs. This year, 32,000 first- and second-year students are receiving grants—the first time that has happened in over a decade in Ontario. This is a very progressive initiative and one in which I take great pride.



The reason this has happened, of course, is that this government has set accessibility to post-secondary education as a priority. I anxiously await details on the initiatives to improve participation rates in post-secondary education for people from communities that are under-represented in those institutions: people from low-income backgrounds, people with disabilities, people from aboriginal communities, people who would be the first in their family to attend post-secondary education, and francophones. We know that not just financial barriers stand in the way of some very bright and capable people continuing with their education. There are other barriers as well—barriers within our power to lower.

For many people, what they need is someone who believes in them—perhaps a teacher—someone who instills a sense of confidence, who urges them to reach higher, to go further, to be the best they can be. For others, the barriers begin in the earliest years, because they have inadequate child care or they get lost in a crowded classroom and fail to achieve their full potential. For some students, attending college or university simply is not within their understanding of the realm of the possible. No one in their family has ever done so, and there is no expectation that they will. Our new first-generation plan will help those students who are the first in their family to go on to post-secondary education.

In the past, I think we have failed to adequately recognize and address the barriers that are faced by some students. This government is going to change that. We're going to understand the many and diverse causes of underachievement and we're going to do everything in our power to fix them. For that, I am very proud of this government.

The other issue that I will briefly touch on in my remarks today is the improvements we've made in health care and what we're going to do to make our health care system even better and stronger.

In my community, I hear more about health care than I do anything else. For my constituents, having a health care system they can count on when they need it is their biggest concern. Their concerns tend to centre around two different areas. The first, of course, is access to family doctors. I'm sure every member in here gets phone calls on a far too regular basis from people who are looking for a doctor, and looking to us for help to get a family doctor. I'm also disturbed not just by the numbers of people looking for family doctors, but the fact that it is the sicker people, the people who need doctors the most, who are having the most difficulty getting doctors. So we're addressing this problem head on. This is a problem that has not happened overnight. It's taken years to develop, and we have taken speedy action to ensure that in the future, access to family doctors will be something that we all have.

I remember not too long ago people would say that if you don't have a good relationship with your doctor, if you don't communicate well with your doctor, then just find another doctor. You sure don't hear people say that any more, do you? Of course, if people don't have

doctors, they go to the emergency room, they go to walk-in clinics or they don't go at all. This presents real problems in continuity of care, and it's a very expensive solution, too.

I look forward to the next round of announcements on family health teams. There are already 69 family health teams that have been announced, 80 more this year, and by the end of our mandate, 150 family health teams will be up and running. This will use the full range of expertise that is available in the health care system. Nurse practitioners will be able to do what they are trained to do, as will dietitians, mental health workers and pharmacists. We don't always need to see a doctor. If you have a healthy baby and you need to take the baby for a check-up, you don't need to see the doctor for that. You don't need to see a doctor for ear infections or advice on nutrition. Because of the family health teams, doctors will be able to see half again the number of people they can now see. It's a wonderful innovation, and one that will improve the level and quality of health care for individuals in our province.

The second thing that we've done, in addition to more family health teams, is increase the number of spots for medical students, with further expansions coming. I am very proud of the initiative with internationally trained medical graduates. We've doubled the number of spaces so we're not wasting the education they received in a different country. We'll help them reach the high standards we demand in Ontario as quickly as they can.

The other issue, of course, in health care is that of wait times. I'm very excited about the initiative we will be posting on the Web site: the wait times for different procedures in different communities, in different hospitals, so that doctors and patients can check on-line and see how long they have to wait for specific procedures in their hospital and in hospitals in their area and across the province. You know, it's astonishing to me that we have not had a system in the past where we can measure wait times. This is an extraordinary innovation. Wait times were always under the control of the physicians and nobody collected the data. We talked to our neighbours, we talked to people about how long they had to wait and what doctors got a shorter wait list. This is going to be all open and accessible and fair, so that patients across the province can see how long they have to wait and where they can go for faster service.

This is a government that is committed to good governance and to good public policy. We have a long-range vision. We are working to build an Ontario that reflects the values of the people in this province. We're working to build a just and caring society, one in which each child has the opportunity to be the very best he or she can be, where every newcomer is welcomed and given what they need to become a full, contributing member of our society.

I'm proud to be part of this government. I'm proud of the initiatives outlined in the throne speech. There is much to do, but we have set our goals and we have taken many steps in the direction of our goals. We are moving confidently in the direction of our dreams.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Further debate?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I've heard a no, so all those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** Pursuant to standing order 55, I rise to give the Legislature the business of the House for next week.

Monday, October 17, in the afternoon, the official opposition will reply to the speech from the throne; in the evening, third reading of Bill 159.

Tuesday, October 18, in the afternoon, third party reply to the speech from the throne; in the evening, third reading of Bill 128.

Wednesday, October 19, in the afternoon, second reading of Bill 211; in the evening, throne speech debate.

Thursday, October 20, in the afternoon, opposition day of the third party.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** If I could just recognize Doug Reycraft, former MPP for Middlesex, in the 33rd and 34th Parliament.

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** Mr. Speaker, I now move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, October 17.

*The House adjourned at 1650.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	<b>Brown, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (L)</b> Speaker / Président	Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Kular, Kuldip (L)	Hamilton Mountain	<b>Bountrogianni, Hon. / L'hon. Marie (L)</b> Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales, ministre responsable du Renouveau démocratique
Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Jeffrey, Linda (L)	Hamilton West / Hamilton-Ouest	Marsales, Judy (L)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Dhillon, Vic (L)	Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington	<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (L)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Huron-Bruce	Mitchell, Carol (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Burlington	Jackson, Cameron (PC)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (L)</b> Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Milloy, John (L)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Van Bommel, Maria (L)
Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	<b>Caplan, Hon. / L'hon. David (L)</b> Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy government House leader / ministre du Renouvellement de l'infrastructure publique, leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement t	Lanark-Carleton	Sterling, Norman W. (PC)
Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Wynne, Kathleen O. (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Robert W. (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tory, John (PC) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Matthews, Deborah (L)
Durham	O'Toole, John (PC)	London West / London-Ouest	<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (L)</b> Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Eglinton-Lawrence	<b>Colle, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (L)</b> Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration	London-Fanshawe	Ramal, Khalil (L)
Elgin-Middlesex-London	<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (L)</b> Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail	Markham	Wong, Tony C. (L)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Tim (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (L)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Essex	<b>Crozier, Bruce (L)</b> Deputy Speaker, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-Président, Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Mississauga East / Mississauga-Est	Fonseca, Peter (L)
Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (L)</b> Minister of Energy / ministre de l'Énergie	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Peterson, Tim (L)
Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Qaadri, Shafiq (L)	Mississauga West / Mississauga-Ouest	Delaney, Bob (L)
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	<b>Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (L)</b> Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement	Nepean-Carleton	Baird, John R. (PC)
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)
Guelph-Wellington	Sandals, Liz (L)	Niagara Falls	Craiton, Kim (L)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Stormont–Dundas– Charlottenburgh	Brownell, Jim (L)
Nipissing	Smith, Monique M. (L)	Sudbury	<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick</b> (L) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Northumberland	Rinaldi, Lou (L)	Thornhill	Racco, Mario G. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Mauro, Bill (L)
Oakville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel (L)	Thunder Bay–Superior	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	North / Thunder Bay–Superior- Nord	
Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	<b>Ramsay, Hon. / L'hon. David</b> (L) Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs / ministre des Richesses naturelles, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton</b> (L) Premier and President of the Executive Council, Minister of Research and Innovation / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif, ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation		<b>Bisson, Gilles</b> (ND)
Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	<b>Watson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim</b> (L) Minister of Health Promotion / ministre de la Promotion de la santé	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George</b> (L) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Ottawa–Orléans	McNeely, Phil (L)	Toronto Centre–Rosedale / Toronto-Centre–Rosedale	Churley, Marilyn (ND) Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Ottawa–Vanier	<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine</b> (L) Minister of Culture, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones	Toronto–Danforth	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Trinity–Spadina	<b>Arnott, Ted</b> (PC) First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Parkdale–High Park	<b>Kennedy, Hon. / L'hon. Gerard</b> (L) Minister of Education / ministre de l'Éducation	Vaughan–King–Aurora	Flaherty, Jim (PC)
Parry Sound–Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Waterloo–Wellington	Zimmer, David (L)
Perth–Middlesex	Wilkinson, John (L)	Whitby–Ajax	<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra</b> (L) Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Peterborough	Leal, Jeff (L)	Willowdale	<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight</b> (L) Minister of Finance, Chair of Cabinet / ministre des Finances, président du Conseil des ministres
Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge	Arthurs, Wayne (L)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	<b>Kwinter, Hon. / L'hon. Monte</b> (L) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Prince Edward–Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)		Munro, Julia (PC)
Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Yakabuski, John (PC)	Windsor–St. Clair	<b>Cordiano, Hon. / L'hon. Joseph</b> (L) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Simia–Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	York Centre / York-Centre	Sergio, Mario (L)
Sault Ste. Marie	Oraziotti, David (L)	York North / York-Nord	
Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Duguid, Brad (L)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Scarborough East / Scarborough-Est	<b>Chambers, Hon. / L'hon. Mary Anne V.</b> (L) Minister of Children and Youth Services / ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse	York West / York-Ouest	
Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Berardinetti, Lorenzo (L)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Vacant
Scarborough–Agincourt	<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry</b> (L) Minister of Government Services / ministre des Services gouvernementaux		
Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)		
Simcoe–Grey	Wilson, Jim (PC)		
St. Catharines	<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J.</b> (L) Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader / ministre du Tourisme, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées, leader parlementaire du gouvernement		
St. Paul's	<b>Bryant, Hon. / L'hon. Michael</b> (L) Attorney General / procureur général		
Stoney Creek	Mossop, Jennifer F. (L)		

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.



## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Jeudi 13 octobre 2005**

### **RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

#### **Comité permanent de la justice**

M. Qaadri ..... 16

Rapport adopté ..... 17

### **PREMIÈRE LECTURE**

#### **Loi de 2005 sur les extincteurs automatiques domiciliaires,**

projet de loi 2, *M<sup>me</sup> Jeffrey*

Adoptée ..... 18

#### **Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies**

publiques, projet de loi 3,

*M. Yakabusi*

Adoptée ..... 18

#### **Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi sur**

**l'assurance-santé (test PSA**

**pour le dépistage du cancer**

**de la prostate), projet de loi 4,**

*M. Mauro*

Adoptée ..... 19

# CONTENTS

Thursday 13 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Tornadoes in Waterloo-Wellington</b>	
Mr. Arnott.....	13
<b>Fire Prevention Week</b>	
Mrs. Jeffrey.....	13
<b>World Sight Day</b>	
Mr. Klees.....	13
Ms. Wynne.....	15
<b>Falconbridge strike</b>	
Mr. Bisson.....	14
<b>Veterans</b>	
Mr. Brownell.....	14
<b>Parole system</b>	
Mr. Dunlop.....	14
<b>Team Ottawa-Orléans</b>	
Mr. McNeely.....	15
<b>Stedman Community Hospice</b>	
Mr. Levac.....	15

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

<b>Standing committee on government agencies</b>	
The Speaker.....	16
Report deemed adopted.....	16
<b>Standing committee on social policy</b>	
Mr. Racco.....	16
Report adopted.....	16
<b>Standing committee on justice policy</b>	
Mr. Qaadri.....	16
Report adopted.....	17
<b>Standing committee on general government</b>	
Mrs. Jeffrey.....	17
Report adopted.....	17
<b>Standing committee on the Legislative Assembly</b>	
Mr. Delaney.....	17
Report adopted.....	17
<b>Standing committee on public accounts</b>	
Mr. Sterling.....	17
Debates adjourned.....	18

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Home Fire Sprinkler Act, 2005,</b>	
Bill 2, <i>Mrs. Jeffrey</i>	
Agreed to.....	18
Mrs. Jeffrey.....	18

## Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Amendment Act (Assistance to Municipalities), 2005, Bill 3, *Mr. Yakabuski*

Agreed to.....	18
Mr. Yakabuski.....	18

## Health Insurance Amendment Act (PSA Tests for Prostate Cancer), 2005, Bill 4, *Mr. Mauro*

Agreed to.....	19
Mr. Mauro.....	19

## MOTIONS

### Consideration of Bill 206

Mr. Bradley.....	19
Agreed to.....	19

### Private members' public business

Mr. Bradley.....	19
Agreed to.....	19

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### Health care

Mr. Smitherman.....	19
Mrs. Witmer.....	22
Ms. Martel.....	22

### Toyota plant in Woodstock

Mr. Cordiano.....	20
Mr. Chudleigh.....	21
Ms. Horwath.....	22

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### RCMP investigation

Mr. Tory.....	25, 26
Mr. McGuinty.....	25, 26, 28, 30, 32, 33
Mr. Wilson.....	28
Mr. Runciman.....	30
Mrs. Witmer.....	32
Mr. Yakabuski.....	33

### Hydro generation

Mr. Hampton.....	27
Mrs. Cansfield.....	27
Mr. McGuinty.....	27

### Public health

Mr. Hampton.....	29
Mr. Smitherman.....	29

### Birth certificates

Mrs. Mitchell.....	29
Mr. Phillips.....	30

## Health care funding

Ms. Martel.....	30
Mr. Smitherman.....	30

## Anti-smoking programs

Ms. Matthews.....	31
Mr. Watson.....	31

## Parole system

Mr. Kormos.....	32
Mr. McGuinty.....	32

## Earthquake in South Asia

Mr. Qaadri.....	33
Mr. Colle.....	33

## Respite care

Mr. Bisson.....	34
Ms. Pupatello.....	34

## PETITIONS

### Optometrists

Mr. O'Toole.....	34
------------------	----

### Health care funding

Ms. Martel.....	35
-----------------	----

### Hospital funding

Mr. Delaney.....	35
------------------	----

### Cormorants

Mr. Ouellette.....	35
--------------------	----

## GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

### Throne speech debate, government

order number 1, <i>Mr. Crozier</i>	
Mr. Crozier.....	36
Ms. Matthews.....	39
Debate adjourned.....	42

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Visitor

Mr. Ruprecht.....	16
-------------------	----

### Reports of parliamentary officers

The Speaker.....	16
------------------	----

### Wearing of ribbons

Ms. Horwath.....	17
------------------	----

### Earthquake in South Asia

Mr. Colle.....	23
Mr. Tory.....	24
Mr. Hampton.....	25

### Congratulations to Speaker

Mr. McGuinty.....	25
-------------------	----

### Business of the House

Mr. Phillips.....	42
-------------------	----

Continued overleaf

No. 4A



N° 4A

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 17 October 2005**

**Lundi 17 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 17 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 17 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### VETERANS

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** I rise in the House today to pay tribute, in this international Year of the Veteran, and thank veterans for their courage and determination. It's also my privilege to congratulate Branch 178 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Bowmanville for 75 years of service. I rise because paying tribute to Branch 178 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Bowmanville is paying tribute to my community and the members who make it strong. On Saturday, October 1, the Legion hosted a special evening to celebrate this anniversary. One of the highlights was paying tribute to the many veterans who have been Legion members for 60 years. I would recognize Rae Abernethy, Don Brooks, Art Brooks, Eric Andrews, Floyd Beckett, Bill Colville, Art Hooper, Ian Hovey, William Kilpatrick, Harvey Jones, Michael Owchar, Don Parker, Ken Palmer, George Bellman, Robert Lockhart and the late Clarence Oke.

Today's Legion continues the important work of helping veterans and their families. The Legion ensures that our community remembers and honours the sacrifice of those who served Canada at war. Branch 178 has also made our community a stronger place, with stronger values that you can count on. This includes support for the sea cadet program through the Navy League, sponsoring sports activities, donating high school scholarships for our youth and sponsoring our pipe band.

I'm proud to stand and respect members of the Legion, our veterans, especially during this Year of the Veteran.

#### THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe):** I learned last week that the Thames Valley District School Board will save \$2.7 million a year on their utility bill. The board has found its savings by focusing on about 10 million square feet of space in 197 board buildings and 229 portables across the school district.

Every year, the Thames Valley District School Board will achieve savings in utility areas such as natural gas, water systems and electricity. Some examples of savings: more than \$159,000 saved in replaced boilers at 30 schools; more than \$132,000 saved in upgrades to caulking,

weather stripping in many different schools; over \$103,000 saved in water system improvements at 35 schools; \$314,000 saved in upgrades—lighting, ventilation, sensors—for 229 portables.

We know that students have a much better chance at success when they learn in schools that are clean, safe and in good repair. The McGuinty government's Good Places to Learn plan is strengthening our province by strengthening the education of our children. The savings on energy costs in Thames Valley means that there will be more resources for Thames Valley classrooms. I congratulate Thames Valley District School Board on its energy savings.

#### CITIZENSHIP WEEK

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I'm pleased to rise today to mark Citizenship Week in Ontario as we celebrate our diversity and the freedoms and privileges that we enjoy in this great province.

As an immigrant myself, I am well aware of the challenges that are faced daily by the 125,000 people each year who adopt Ontario as their home. We must ensure that those coming to Ontario have the opportunity to put their qualifications to work so that they can support their families and make a positive contribution to our communities.

This government wants us to believe that a federal-provincial agreement to increase funding for immigration services is imminent. Through two provincial and three federal ministers, there is still no formal agreement and no additional funds. Our settlement agencies desperately need increased funding to provide services for newcomers.

As the Legislature marks Citizenship Week, let me remind and renew John Tory's challenge to the Premier in this House last week, which was to increase funding to the South Asian earthquake relief efforts beyond the \$1-million commitment and to match private donations, thereby demonstrating in a very practical way that this government recognizes and is prepared to do something to support our citizens and those citizens abroad. I call on the Legislature and I call on this government to do the right thing: Increase funding to the South Asian relief effort.

#### RIDING OF ANCASTER-DUNDAS- FLAMBOROUGH-ALDERSHOT

**Mr. Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot):** With all the talk about democratic

renewal, allow me to share some insights from our recent ADFA constituency council. The council is a non-partisan group of 60 local community champions. Listening carefully to their advice is always refreshing.

Here are some insights from our most recent meeting:

There is an appreciation that stability and civility have been returned to our education system. The new emphasis on local health care decision-making was applauded. The greenbelt initiative has been well received. One caution, however: We must find ways to bring added value to our agricultural stakeholders. The group recommends responding to the looming energy crisis with a more aggressive conservation program, smart meters and a greater emphasis on public transit. Uploading social services from municipalities to the province was seen as a priority. Finally, amalgamation isn't working. The constituency council would like to see a full fiscal and social audit of the impact of amalgamation, something our mayor promised in his last election campaign.

I believe that while democratic reform in this place is important and necessary, an even more important opportunity for real reform exists at the local riding level. I deeply value the efforts of the difference-makers in my community who are prepared to dare and share and care with each other and with their provincial member to build the stronger, healthier, more caring and sustainable communities we all desire.

#### WEST LINCOLN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie—Lincoln):** As members of the chamber know, west Niagara is in need of a new hospital. There are great, talented, hard-working people at the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital in Grimsby. They and the hospital have an excellent reputation. I know that the minister across is very well aware of that. But they work in a tired, old building in need of renewal in a community that is seeing an aging population grow in numbers and many young families moving to the area.

The community has already raised \$12.9 million for the new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital. Over the summer, I have written to both the Minister of Health and the Premier asking for a firm commitment to this hospital and for a clear outline of what the funding formula will be. As of yet, we have not had a satisfactory answer to those inquiries. If there were a clear funding formula in place based on need, local fundraising and the quality of the plan, we would be very confident of our hospital moving forward expeditiously. However, unfortunately, instead it is starting to look like the hospital capital process is more about politics and less about building the hospitals that we need.

I think we deserve the answers to these simple questions, and we deserve these answers promptly: Will the McGuinty government fund the new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital; what will the split be between the local and provincial fundraising; and when will the new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital be opening to serve their community?

1340

#### POVERTY

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto—Danforth):** Today is the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and the National Day of Action to End Child Poverty in Canada. This day arrives on the heels of yet another report detailing the growing disparity and inequity within this city.

The Toronto Community Foundation released its annual report card, *Vital Signs*, on how this city is faring. It repeated what it has been saying for several years: Poverty is prevalent and is growing. But while the gap between the poorest and the richest families' incomes continues to rise, the McGuinty Liberals have not yet moved on improving income assistance programs to meet people's most basic needs, and they continue to take funds away from the poorest families with its odious clawback of the national child benefit supplement, money that would prevent parents from having to choose between paying the rent and feeding the kids.

Sue Cox, executive director of the Daily Bread Food Bank, a position formerly held by the current Minister of Education, was quoted in the *Toronto Star* this weekend as saying that she "has never seen the food bank network in the Greater Toronto Area as strained as it is now."

The *Vital Signs* report echoed the United Way report of a few years ago, *Poverty by Postal Code*. The numbers show that the areas of concentrated poverty in Toronto have risen from 30 in 1980 to 120 in 2001. Among those most impacted are our young people. There has been a 100% increase in the number of children living in high-poverty neighbourhoods and a 60% increase in the number of youth living in higher-poverty neighbourhoods.

This is not good enough.

#### TTC SAFETY

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I rise today on behalf of all of us to offer sympathies and get-well wishes to a dedicated TTC employee who was the victim of a shooting this past Saturday night while on duty in the northeast area of the city of Toronto.

It is an unfortunate fact that transit operators have to be subjected to daily confrontations, verbal abuse and, at rare times, violence. All TTC operators are to be commended for their strong abilities in dealing with dangerous situations.

This government is tough on crime and the causes of crime in Toronto and across this province. Just recently, our government's Mandatory Gunshot Wounds Reporting Act came into effect. It requires hospitals to report gunshot or other wounds to the police. We are the first province in Canada to pass such legislation. Furthermore, our government will be working with communities, including the city of Toronto, to hire 1,000 more police officers across the province, 500 of which will be deployed to combat guns, gangs, youth crime and other



priority areas. As well, our government is taking positive steps to prevent crime in the community with the safer communities grant and the community-use-of-schools program. We are also making communities safer by getting offenders in tough, structured, community-based work programs instead of spending the weekend watching television.

Again I would like to extend our sympathy and best wishes to the bus driver, his family and his extended family at the TTC. We have every confidence that the Toronto Police Service will find the suspects and ensure that our communities remain safe.

### SCHIZOPHRENIA

**Mr. Kuldip Kular (Bramalea–Gore–Malton–Springdale):** I am pleased to rise today to acknowledge that October is Schizophrenia Awareness Month, and to applaud the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario for its efforts to draw much-needed attention to this increasingly serious illness which affects the lives of so many Ontarians.

Schizophrenia affects one in 100 people in Ontario; that's over 120,000 people. It affects both youth and adults alike and is often misunderstood or stigmatized as being weird or unusual. The reality is that schizophrenia can be treated and its impact significantly lessened with proper medication and behavioural therapy.

As a family physician turned politician and as a strong advocate of educating others on mental health issues, I know first-hand the importance of raising awareness on schizophrenia. Education alone makes early detection possible. Together, we can all work to eliminate the stigma attached to this illness.

I would like to commend the efforts of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario for helping to make this illness better understood and treated both within the medical community and in the public. I want to acknowledge some of the members of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, who have joined us here today in the east lobby.

### GEORGE HISLOP

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** I rise today to honour the death of a hero and icon of the gay community in Canada, George Hislop, who died just over a week ago, on October 8, at the age of 78.

George Hislop was a role model, demonstrating to countless young gay men how to live openly without shame and without fear. He always said, "I never came out of the closet because I was never in it."

George was an actor in his early days who became an activist later, almost by accident, because of the homophobic "nonsense," as he called it. He said, "I couldn't stand it any more. But then you speak up, attract attention and it snowballs from there."

He led the first gay protest on the steps of the House of Commons in 1971. Around the same time he helped organize Toronto's first Gay Day, a gaggle of brave souls

which has grown into the huge annual Gay Pride celebration. Thirty-four years later, Hislop was named the grand marshal of the Pride Parade.

In 1980, he was the first openly gay candidate to run for municipal office in Toronto, running for city council. When George's partner of nearly 28 years, Ron Shearer, died in 1986, George fought to access survivor benefits from the Canada pension plan. He finally declared victory in November of 2004, and in August he received his first cheque from the federal government.

Strong, honest, open men and politicians like Toronto city councillor Kyle Rae and our own Minister of Health, George Smitherman, can be models for a younger generation at least in some part because George Hislop went before them. I understand from George Smitherman that the very first gay bar he ever went to was owned by George Hislop.

George Hislop was a hero in the gay and lesbian community. He was a man who made Canada a safer, more tolerant place. I am privileged to ask all members to join me in honouring the life of George Robert Hislop for the brave hero that he was.

### VISITORS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: In the members' gallery today I would like to introduce Diane Austin, who is the executive director of Community Living Peterborough, and four individuals who are supported by Community Living Peterborough: Lynda Nairn, Barb Anderson, Gord Herd and Graham Sheldon. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. That of course is not a point of order, but welcome.

### RESIGNATION OF MEMBER FOR SCARBOROUGH–ROUGE RIVER

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that during the adjournment a vacancy has occurred in the membership of the House by the reason of the resignation of Alvin Curling as member for the electoral district of Scarborough–Rouge River, effective August 19, 2005. Accordingly, my warrant has been issued to the Chief Election Officer for the issue of a writ for a by-election.

### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg the indulgence of the House to allow the pages to assemble for their introduction.

I would ask all members to join me in welcoming this group of legislative pages serving in the second session of the 38th Parliament: Trevor Appleby from Halton, Joyce Berkers from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, Mandy Min Che from St. Paul's, Alexandra Da Silva from Mississauga East, Loreena Dobson from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Jasmine Haemel from Peterborough, Graeme Kennedy from Don Valley East,

Michael Kirkland from Sarnia—Lambton, Kiki Kirkpatrick from Haliburton—Victoria—Brock, Michelle Lauzon from Eglinton—Lawrence, Austin MacDonald from London West, Frances Maranger from Perth—Middlesex, Andrew McMahon from Elgin—Middlesex—London, Nina Patti from Toronto Centre—Rosedale, Kerby Reed Balen from Simcoe North, Anika Roberts from Beaches—East York, Adam Rupani from Nepean—Carleton, Jeffrey Skinner from Markham, and Charlie Tan from Mississauga West. Welcome.

*Applause.*

1350

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENT ACT (HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD REGIMENT MEMORIAL HIGHWAY), 2005

### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'AMÉNAGEMENT DES VOIES PUBLIQUES ET DES TRANSPORTS EN COMMUN (ROUTE COMMÉMORATIVE HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD REGIMENT)

Mr. Parsons moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act to name a portion of Highway 62 and Highway 33 the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway / Projet de loi 5, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies publiques et des transports en commun pour nommer une section des routes 62 et 33 route commémorative Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward—Hastings):** We enjoy a level of freedom in this country that is the envy of the rest of the world. I'm sure I can speak on behalf of every member in this House when I say that we are very conscious of the price that has been paid for that freedom—a horrible price by some individuals and families.

The Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, affectionately known as the Hasty P's, is a regiment that dates back to 1800. The modern regiment won tremendous battle honours in Italy, Sicily and Greece during World War II.

I would like to see this highway named so that we can remember, each and every time, as we drive on this highway, the price that was paid for our freedom. Our veterans are leaving us far too soon and in far too large numbers. This is an opportunity for the young people of this province and of this country to be reminded every

day of the price that has been paid to ensure that we enjoy the freedom and quality of life that we do in this province.

### FRED GLOGER TENANT PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (VITAL SERVICES), 2005

### LOI FRED GLOGER DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DES LOCATAIRES (SERVICES ESSENTIELS)

Ms. Horwath moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act, in memory of Fred Gloger, to amend the Tenant Protection Act, 1997 in respect of vital services / Projet de loi 6, Loi à la mémoire de Fred Gloger modifiant la Loi sur la protection des locataires à l'égard des services essentiels.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This bill replaces my former bill, Bill 170, which died along with a number of other important bills when the McGuinty government prorogued the House. My bill amends the Tenant Protect Act, 1997, to ensure that tenants who pay for their utilities through their rent don't have their vital services, like hydro, gas or water, disconnected because their landlord refuses to pay the bill.

I have a lot more detail around that, but I think now is the time that this bill needs to be passed. We're going into the cold winter months, and the tenants of Ontario deserve to be protected by basic legislation, because they've already paid their utilities in their rent and they need to make sure that those utilities are kept on during these cold upcoming months.

## BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I have an announcement. I am going to announce the latest addition to the Milloy family, the member for Kitchener Centre. Last Saturday evening, John and Sara gave birth—mostly Sara, I'm told—to a beautiful eight-pound, nine-ounce baby boy. Mom and dad are doing just fine.

## MOTIONS

### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that the following amendments be made to the membership of certain committees:

On the standing committee on estimates, Mr. Dunlop replaces Mr. O'Toole; on the standing committee on



finance and economic affairs, Mr. Arthurs replaces Mr. Colle.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved that the following amendments be made to the membership of certain committees:

On the standing committee on estimates, Mr. Dunlop replaces Mr. O'Toole; on the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, Mr. Arthurs replaces Mr. Colle.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, October 17, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved that, pursuant to standing—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker:** Dispensed.

Shall the motion carry?

**Interjections.**

**The Speaker:** No, we'll do it. I heard a no.

Mr. Bradley has moved that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Monday, October 17, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1357 to 1402.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Arthurs, Wayne  
Baird, John R.  
Bartolucci, Rick  
Bentley, Christopher  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Bryant, Michael  
Cansfield, Donna H.  
Caplan, David  
Chambers, Mary Anne V.  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Colle, Mike  
Craiton, Kim  
Crozier, Bruce  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Di Cocco, Caroline  
Dombrowsky, Leona  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fonseca, Peter  
Gerretsen, John  
Hardeman, Ernie  
Hudak, Tim  
Jackson, Cameron  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Klees, Frank  
Kular, Kuldeep  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Levac, Dave  
Marsales, Judy  
Matthews, Deborah  
McMeekin, Ted  
McNeely, Phil  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Miller, Norm  
O'Toole, John  
Oraziotti, David  
Parsons, Ernie  
Peters, Steve  
Phillips, Gerry  
Pupatello, Sandra

Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ramal, Khalil  
Rinaldi, Lou  
Runciman, Robert W.  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Sandals, Liz  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Sorbara, Gregory S.  
Takhari, Harinder S.  
Tory, John  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Watson, Jim  
Wilkinson, John  
Wilson, Jim  
Witmer, Elizabeth  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakabuski, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time.

## Nays

Bisson, Gilles  
Churley, Marilyn

Horwath, Andrea  
Kormos, Peter

Marchese, Rosario  
Prue, Michael

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 67; the nays are 6.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### SEMAINE DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES PUBLIQUES DE L'ONTARIO

### ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARY WEEK

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur (ministre de la Culture, ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones):** C'est avec plaisir que je me lève devant la Chambre aujourd'hui pour faire honneur à nos bibliothèques publiques et à nos bibliothèques des Premières nations durant la Semaine des bibliothèques publiques de l'Ontario, qui se déroulera jusqu'au 23 octobre. Le thème de la Semaine des bibliothèques publiques de l'Ontario est Destination Imagination.

Destination Imagination is the perfect theme to celebrate the great selection of creative stories in our libraries and an outstanding range of programs, resources and services that help build stronger, healthier communities. We should all be very proud of our libraries. Ontario has one of the best public library systems in the world.

La Semaine des bibliothèques publiques de l'Ontario est un excellent moyen de faire honneur aux contributions culturelles, éducatives et économiques qu'apportent nos bibliothèques. Source fiable d'information dans nos collectivités, elles assurent la réussite de nos étudiants, maintiennent la compétitivité de nos entreprises et améliorent notre qualité de vie.

En utilisant une nouvelle technologie pour numériser l'histoire locale et permettre aux gens d'accéder à l'Internet grâce à plus de 6 000 ordinateurs dans toute la province, les bibliothèques publiques sont véritablement devenues l'une de nos plus importantes ressources communautaires, au service des Ontariens et Ontariennes de tout âge.

In 2003, 66 million people visited our public libraries, circulating more than 100 million items. In that same year, more than 2.2 million people participated in over 110,000 library programs.

En 2003, 66 millions de personnes ont visité nos bibliothèques publiques, circulant plus de 100 millions de documents. Au cours de la même année, plus de 2,2 millions de personnes ont participé aux plus de 110 000 programmes organisés par les bibliothèques.



Our public libraries make our province a better place to live and work. I encourage all residents to visit their local public libraries this week to take part in the celebration. To each of you, I extend a special invitation to add one of your local libraries to your destination list.

Bonne Semaine des bibliothèques publiques.

## HEALTH PROMOTION PROMOTION DE LA SANTÉ

### **Hon. Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion):**

I'm honoured today to stand before you to give my first statement as Ontario's Minister of Health Promotion. As members know, Premier McGuinty announced the creation of the Ministry of Health Promotion last June. It was an historic announcement because it's the first time Ontario has had a ministry devoted entirely to the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles.

It was with interest I noted just last Friday that the Premier of Saskatchewan appointed a counterpart and followed our lead by creating the new Ministry of Healthy Living.

The smoke-free Ontario campaign tops our list of key priorities as the cornerstone of our government's health promotion effort. My number one priority is to deliver on the promise we made during our election campaign, the promise to move toward a smoke-free Ontario.

The groundwork for that task has already been laid by my cabinet colleague the Honourable George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, and Dr. Sheela Basrur, our chief medical officer of health. As you know, the work that these two and many others in this House and in the community did on Bill 164, the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, was a tremendous and positive step forward. The bill was passed and received royal assent in June of this year. In essence, it will ban smoking in all enclosed workplaces and public places in the province beginning on May 31 next year, and will phase out the display of tobacco products, with a complete ban beginning May 31, 2008. I thank my colleague from Ottawa-Orléans for the work that he did on that file.

1410

In addition to helping Ontarians quit smoking, smoke-free Ontario aims to prevent our young people from starting to smoke and to protect all Ontarians from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Il s'agit de la plus vaste campagne de lutte contre le tabagisme de l'histoire de la province de l'Ontario. Je dois aussi ajouter que la campagne Ontario sans fumée fera de notre province un des chefs de file en Amérique du Nord en matière de lutte contre le tabagisme.

Pour appuyer cette campagne, nous avons mis sur pied le Comité consultatif de la campagne Ontario sans fumée, qui est composé de 15 membres. Avec l'aide de ce comité, nous inciterons les Ontariennes et Ontariens à s'engager à préserver leur santé et celle des autres.

I am proud to be chairing the smoke-free Ontario campaign committee and grateful for the experience and

expertise of the committee members. I'd like to give you a list of those committee members and a brief summary of their contributions:

John Beaucage, former chief of the Wasauksing First Nation, chief, and president of the Union of Ontario Indians, with a strong commitment to the Premier's brighter future for aboriginal children and youth initiative;

Ted Boadway, executive director of health policy for the Ontario Medical Association, who led the OMA fight against tobacco;

Peter Goodhand, chief executive director of the Canadian Cancer Society's Ontario division, an organization that has one of the most long-standing commitments to tobacco control;

Steve Goren, past president of the Ontario Dental Association, who played an important role in the clinical tobacco intervention program;

Marc Kealey, chief executive officer of the Ontario Pharmacists' Association and a strong supporter of the clinical tobacco intervention program;

Michael Perley, executive director of the Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco and a leader of the tobacco control movement for more than a decade, with notable success in moving the Ontario tobacco strategy forward community by community;

Andrew Pipe, founder of Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada and director of prevention and rehabilitation at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, who has demonstrated outstanding scientific and professional leadership in the tobacco control battle;

Manu Malkani, president and chief executive officer of the Ontario Lung Association, an organization that has been impressing upon young people the dangers of smoking;

Isabelle Michel, gérante de pratique professionnelle et de développement au Service de santé publique de Sudbury et du district, qui a une vaste expérience et une compréhension du rôle des services de santé publique dans la lutte contre le tabagisme;

Merle Nicholds, former mayor of Kanata and active community volunteer for asthma and cancer awareness campaigns;

Jenny Rajabally, vice-president of health care planning at Cambridge Memorial Hospital;

Rocco Rossi, chief executive officer of the Ontario Heart and Stroke Foundation, and key in fighting tobacco advertising aimed at young people;

Terry Sullivan, president and chief executive officer of Cancer Care Ontario, who has had a strong background in tobacco control and representing an organization that is developing an aboriginal tobacco strategy;

Michelle Tham, an anti-smoking activist since the age of 14, who has worked with the youth advisory group that brought us the ministry's very successful stupid.ca campaign aimed at steering young people away from smoking; and finally,

Carol Timmings, director of chronic disease prevention at Toronto Public Health, who brings many years of experience in developing prevention programs.

All of these men and women from across the province of Ontario are giving of their time and their expertise. They are volunteers, and I'm very appreciative of their efforts.

Je suis ravi d'avoir l'occasion de travailler avec ces professionnels dévoués à réduire l'usage du tabac et à sauver des vies.

These people will be making a concerned effort to advise the government on developing regulations for the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, preparing for enforcement of the new act on May 31, 2006, rolling out educational programs this fall aimed particularly at young people, creating a provincial smoking cessation program, and evaluating the results of the campaign.

In conclusion, I'd be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to pay tribute to someone who has been, for us, a living, breathing example of why the smoke-free legislation is so important. Many of you will remember Heather Crowe. Heather is the waitress who developed lung cancer due to second-hand smoke and who has been featured in many of the commercials and material related to the need to protect non-smokers from the ravages of second-hand smoke. Heather's cancer, unfortunately, has advanced considerably, and she now resides in a nursing home to get the additional support for living and pain management that has become necessary.

Despite this, Heather continues to speak out and to speak to hospitality workers and legislators across the country about the need to take action. In fact, last week she received an award from an Ottawa youth group, Exposé, for her work in letting young people know the devastating consequences of second-hand smoke.

I spoke with Heather a few weeks ago when she attended a farewell reception for Dr. Rob Cushman, who was leaving as our very well known and well regarded chief medical officer of health in Ottawa, and she was still at this point offering to do whatever she could to help me in my new portfolio.

On behalf of all of us, I believe, in this chamber, I'd like to thank Heather for her courage, dedication and commitment to this cause. Single-handedly, Heather has made an unparalleled contribution to our society.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I am pleased to announce today that our government has reached an agreement with Bruce Power. Throughout the negotiation process, the government's key objectives were to reach an agreement that is fair for Ontario ratepayers and taxpayers and to ensure that the financial risks would not be left on the shoulders of Ontarians. I'm pleased to report to the House that the government was successful in meeting these objectives. Bruce Power has agreed to pay the full cost of the capital upgrades required to bring units 1 and 2 on-line. In addition, Bruce

Power is paying the full capital costs of refurbishing unit 3 when it reaches the end of its operational life and replacing the steam generators at unit 4. The investment by Bruce Power is estimated to be \$4.25 billion. Ontario ratepayers and taxpayers will not—not—be contributing capital funds to this project. Let me say this again: Ontario ratepayers and taxpayers will not be contributing capital dollars to this project.

This project will deliver 1,500 megawatts of electricity, a significant boost to our province's energy supply. To put this into perspective, refurbishing units 1 and 2 will generate almost as much power as Niagara Falls. That's enough power for one million homes, or a city the size of Ottawa. In addition to increasing our electricity generation capacity, this four-year project is estimated to create an additional 1,500 construction jobs. This will have a significant impact on the security, growth and prosperity of the community.

I would like to thank all staff in the Ministry of Energy who were involved in this initiative. Thank you for your hard work on behalf of all Ontarians.

This truly is a landmark transaction for our province, but it is not a decision we have taken lightly. To ensure that we are reaching the best agreement possible for Ontario ratepayers and taxpayers, the agreement was subjected to a number of due diligence reviews by financial, legal and technical advisers, all of whom have signed off on the agreement that has been reached. I would like to express my thanks to our advisers for their counsel throughout this process.

In addition to these due diligence reviews, the government engaged CIBC World Markets to conduct a review of the agreement and to provide a fairness opinion. I am pleased to report today that CIBC has indicated that the agreement is a fair deal for Ontario ratepayers and taxpayers.

The final contract was also subject to cabinet approval.

The agreement and the fairness opinion have been posted on the ministry's Web site as of today at 1 o'clock so that all Ontarians can have access to this information.

Finally, I'm pleased to report to the House that I've referred the agreement to the Auditor General for review.

1420

As honourable members know, Ontario faces a looming electricity supply gap, the result of inaction by previous governments. I would like to remind the House of the dire straits in which previous administrations have left us. Following 10 years of neglect, there was no plan for new electricity generation, no plan for energy conservation, no strategy for managing our existing access, no accountability, no transparency or oversight of our crown corporations and absolutely no leadership. In the 10 years leading up to the last election, less than 2,900 megawatts of new power was brought on-line in Ontario, and yet, over the next 15 years, Ontarians will need to refurbish, rebuild or replace 25,000 megawatts of supply.

One week ago I was appointed Minister of Energy, with a mandate to continue the transformation of our



electricity system to ensure the future prosperity of our province. I'm honoured to serve this province, and accept this responsibility with great humility. I had the pleasure of working very closely with my predecessor, the member for Windsor–St. Clair, who was responsible for turning around a system that was beginning to fall to pieces.

The member for Windsor–St. Clair deserves our sincere thanks and appreciation for starting the process of transforming our energy system. We have come a long way, and we have further to go. Let me tell you, I'm here to finish the job.

In the days and weeks ahead, I will be taking bold and decisive action to ensure Ontario has an energy system that is safe, clean, reliable and affordable, and that we deliver on our plan. Our energy plan consists of three key components: We will maximize our existing generation and transmission assets; we will build new generation capacity; and we will create a culture of conservation in this province.

This agreement with Bruce Power ensures that we continue to maximize our existing assets to ensure a stable supply of energy. This government has set the wheels in motion to create more new generating capacity than any other jurisdiction in North America, with nearly 9,000 megawatts of diversified generating capacity, enough for 4.1 million homes. I will continue to carry out this plan.

Our plan is bold; our vision for our province is clear: an Ontario where industry has a reliable source of clean, affordable energy; an Ontario that leads in sustainable and affordable energy supply; and an Ontario that remains prosperous and the envy of the world. I will carry out this plan, and I look forward to working with all Ontarians to make it happen.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):**

First, let me congratulate the new Minister of Energy on her appointment; I wish her the very best.

What a difference a week makes. A week ago, I would have been making this response to the former Minister of Energy, but the self-proclaimed expert on human evolution has decided to write his thesis on neanderthals from seat five, so we will respond to the statement from this minister.

While we believe this is a positive move, we ask the government what took so long—two years. While the energy situation in this province has deteriorated, they've taken two years to reach this agreement with Bruce Power. The fact that they have reached this agreement is a complete validation of the previous government's plan to enter into a private-public partnership with Bruce Power.

They're taking credit for bringing all this power online. I think it should be pointed out that the agreement to refurbish Bruce units 3 and 4 was done under the previous government.

One of the problems is that with their dithering over two years, this project will not be done before their self-imposed deadline to shut down 25% of our power supply

in Ontario, with no plan for how to replace it. The other concern we have is that power consumption and demand in this province are growing at a minimum rate of 250 megawatts a year. By the time this work is completed, we will have eaten up 1,000 of the 1,500 megawatts this project is supposed to provide.

Under this government's policies, Ontarians are continuing to fall further and further behind. This announcement, while it is positive, will not answer the question of where we in this province are going to be in 2007 and 2009 with regard to our energy needs under the policies of this government. They have yet to answer those questions. We are awaiting those answers.

## HEALTH PROMOTION

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):**

Congratulations to the new energy minister on her first speech.

I'd just like to briefly respond to the announcement that was made today by Minister Watson regarding smoking and tobacco. Certainly we support any initiatives that are going to have a positive impact on ensuring that young people do not start to smoke. We also think that much more needs to be done in the way of cessation programs; I see that's going to happen. I see you've set up a committee, and I hope you will allow all those individuals to participate fully in the discussions and decision-making.

The one thing I do not see reflected here is that as this policy moves forward, we also need to be cognizant that it's going to have an impact on the economy of this province. I hope you will take a look at how you will deal with those who are no longer going to have their livelihood, and what you are prepared to do as well to assist those individuals who grow the tobacco and what other crops are available for them.

We applaud you today. There are still far too many people who die of cancer. We certainly wish the committee well in all their endeavours.

## ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARY WEEK

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** I

would like to speak briefly to the fact that this is library week. I think it's extremely important that the government remember what they have done this year. Here is a headline: "Ontario Slashes Library Funding \$1.2 M." This was in the Toronto Star on June 27 this year, and the other headline says, "Budget cuts called 'kick in the teeth' for rural areas."

This government "quietly slashed funding for public libraries." Not only did they hurt all libraries in the province of Ontario, but they particularly hurt rural and northern libraries, because there was this cut of \$1.2 million from services, including the interlibrary loan system. Again, people say that this "flies in the face" of a government that says it's emphasizing education and yet is taking away this tool from people in this province. In



fact, the chief librarian at Bruce County Public Library said that at least with Harris, you knew what he was going to do. "These guys just did it and ran"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Response?

1430

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** I want to reply to the Minister of Energy and the McGuinty government on today's announcement about the McGuinty government now endorsing private nuclear power in the province of Ontario.

What I want to do, though, is contrast what the McGuinty government is saying with what the private corporations are saying. The McGuinty government wants the people of Ontario to believe that this will only cost them \$4.25 billion. What do you get for \$4.25 billion? Do you get a new facility? No. For \$4.25 billion you get a fixer-upper.

It is very important that the hydro ratepayers in the province read the print that is enclosed in what the private corporation is saying to investors. Here is TransCanada PipeLines' press release. What do they say on page 4 of the press release? The McGuinty government doesn't want to talk about this. They point out that if there are cost overruns with these facilities, the ratepayers of Ontario pick up 50% of the cost overrun up to \$618 million and 25% beyond that.

Some of us have watched nuclear power in Ontario over the past 30 years. There has never been a nuclear plant constructed or refurbished that has come in at cost. To repeat: Darlington was supposed to cost \$4.7 billion. When it was built by the former Liberal government under David Peterson, it came in at \$15 billion—a \$10-billion cost overrun. Pickering was supposed to cost, oh, about \$800 million for total refurbishment. The final bill still isn't in on that, but the cost overrun was more than 50%.

The McGuinty government wants hydro consumers to believe that you get a good deal at \$4.25 billion, but if there is a \$2-billion cost overrun, the people of Ontario pick up another billion dollars, so that a \$4.25-billion cost suddenly becomes a \$5.25-billion cost.

But then you have to read TransCanada's note to their investors, because what it also says is that in this deal the lease costs for units 1, 2 and 3 will each be reduced by \$20 million per year. Well, \$20 million times three is \$60 million. The government talks about a 20-year agreement: over 20 years, another \$1.2 billion. So suddenly what the McGuinty government wants to sell to hydro consumers as a \$4.25-billion good deal becomes an over-\$6.5-billion deal. What do you get for it? Do you get brand, spanking new nuclear reactors? No. You get another nuclear fixer-upper.

The McGuinty government says this is a good deal. What is really also missing here is, I was hoping we would hear from the McGuinty government today a

strategy for dealing with nuclear waste because we've been accumulating radioactive nuclear waste now since the 1960s and still no plan for the storage of very toxic nuclear waste—no plan. I was hoping the McGuinty government would disclose how they're going to balance this private corporation's drive for profit against protecting the public interest in terms of public safety. Any plan today? Nothing.

I want to be clear what this is: This is a sweetheart deal for a private nuclear company. The McGuinty government advertises it at \$4.25 billion. You read the fine print: This is easily a \$6.5-billion sweetheart deal for private nuclear power.

### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I'd like to welcome our friend Bob Frankford, who was the MPP for Scarborough East in the 35th Parliament. Bob is in the west public gallery. Welcome, Bob.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. I understand that the government is preoccupied with other matters, given the resignation we saw last week, but in light of your relative silence to date, can you list for us the specific initiatives implemented by your government in recent months to address the gun crime we've seen for months and months here in Toronto and in other communities around the province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm pleased to be able to speak to this question. I know this is a matter that concerns all of us. Let me just take the opportunity today, on behalf of everybody in the House, I know, to extend our sympathies to the TTC bus driver who sadly sustained injury during the course of the weekend.

There is a real issue before all of us when it comes to guns and gangs, particularly insofar as it affects the city of Toronto, and we have a role to play in this; of that, there is no doubt. In addition to the federal government, the municipal government, the police and, I would argue, the communities themselves as well here in the province, we have some responsibility too. I can say, with respect to our general approach—and I'll provide more details in ensuing questions—we believe that an intelligent approach to crime demands that it be two-pronged in nature, that you be both tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. I look forward to providing more details in ensuing questions.

**Mr. Tory:** I agree with the Premier, and you said the same thing in the throne speech about being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. But the fact of

the matter is that only after intense pressure did you or anybody from your government say anything on this subject. The Attorney General of Ontario set out to a hastily arranged news conference, where he put forward a series of measures—no timing, no funding, no details. In fact, just now you had no answer when it came to the specifics of what you've done. That press conference he had was 47 days ago, and we've heard nothing in terms of details from your government since.

My question is this: How many gun shops, whether they needed it or not, have been inspected, as promised 47 days ago? What about a gun amnesty program? Crime Stoppers managed to come up with one. Where's yours? And what specifically have you done on gun sentencing and crime that you talked about in the throne speech? Specifically, what have you done about it?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'll detail some of the things we've done with respect to getting tough on crime, and in a supplementary, I'll talk about some of those things we've done with respect to causes of crime.

Of course, you will know that we are putting another 1,000 police officers on the streets of Ontario. We've already hired 29 new judges, 50 new crown attorneys and 55 more parole and probation officers. We've established an anti-guns-and-gangs unit to make it easier for all law enforcement personnel to work together. It is true, the Attorney General is seeking tougher penalties in the Criminal Code for gun-related crimes. I am pleased to report as well that we are the first jurisdiction in North America to make mandatory the reporting of gunshot wounds. We've also brought in new tools for our prosecutors, improved the witness protection program, launched a blitz of gun businesses and several other initiatives, and there's more to come.

**Mr. Tory:** I think most people in Ontario would want to see what you're doing to stop gunshot wounds from happening instead of just reporting them.

This weekend, police forces in Toronto and Barrie were left to investigate horrific shootings, including the one you referred to, and I join you in expressing our condolences to the bus driver involved, an innocent bus driver shot in the face while driving a bus in Toronto. Unfortunately, this is a pattern that has plagued our cities all summer long. Twenty-nine months ago, you promised for the first time to put 1,000 new police officers on the streets. As of today, 29 months after the promise, there's not 1,000, there's not 100, there's not one new police officer on the streets of this province based on that promise, and that, I tell you, is not acceptable.

In each instance, your government is long on talk and short on results, and nowhere are the results needed more than in fighting gun crime. When can we expect some real action and some real results from your government? When?

1440

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I have already listed a number of initiatives with respect to dealing with crime and attacking criminality itself.

There is another important dimension to this, one which in fact the union representative made reference to in his remarks reported in the media today. He said, "We need to establish better programs in the inner city to make sure that these young people ... have avenues to allocate their time so they're not hanging out on the streets." I fully support the sentiment conveyed in that statement.

So in addition to those elements where we are getting tough on crime, we're doing some other things to reach kids before they get involved in criminal activity.

We've introduced community use of schools. As a result of cuts made by the former Conservative government, those were shut down. Now opportunities for young people have opened up in those schools again.

The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities recently announced a new pre-apprenticeship project to ensure that young people get the necessary skills to enrol in apprenticeship programs.

We have summer job programs that we are supporting, together with the city of Toronto as well.

We have done much, and there is still more to do.

## WASTE DISPOSAL

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My next question is for the Premier as well. Premier, like crime, you have been silent on another important issue facing communities across Ontario. Do you have a plan, or have you insisted there be a plan, with respect to the possibility that the US border might close to garbage from the greater Toronto area?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I know that the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment is eager to speak to this, but let me just begin by saying that we are working with the city of Toronto. The responsibility, of course, for management of waste is municipal. Businesses which have contracts of their own also must assume responsibility for that. There is a contract in place. We are assured by the city of Toronto that should the hauler be unable to deliver that garbage to the landfill site in question, it has an ensuing responsibility to deliver it to yet another landfill site. We will continue to monitor the situation very closely.

If the leader of the official opposition has specific sites in mind, I would ask that he put those communities on notice today so that they have some understanding of where it is he thinks Toronto's waste should be delivered.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. Order.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier would try to pass the buck on this to anybody he could, including me. But the bottom line is, just think about your own answer you just gave, where you said that the contractor has the responsibility to find some other place for it.



If the border is closed, I say to you, Mr. Premier, where are they going to put it—under their bed? For goodness' sake, your own environment minister said it best two weeks ago when she said that your government has no plan to deal with the possibility of the border being closed.

Toronto, York, Peel and Durham all now rely on Michigan to dispose of their garbage. They issued to you a report that outlines 12 Ontario landfills that could take waste, but warns that all of that capacity would be full in six months. It also recommended that your government should be involved in developing a contingency plan.

Premier, given that that report was eight months ago and we've heard precisely zero from you or your minister since then, I will ask you again: Are you working on a plan or are you requiring that a plan be delivered to you by a specific date from the municipalities you say are responsible? If not, why not, and if you are working on such a plan, when will it be made public?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the parliamentary assistant, Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, congratulations; Hugh Edighoffer would be proud of you, sir.

I would be remiss if I didn't note, for all the members of the House, that I'm sure we all join in sending congratulations to our colleague the member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore on the safe delivery of her two bouncing baby boys, Zachary and Ryan.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I'm at a loss to listen to the Leader of the Opposition, because I'm referred to the Tory party Web site of February 24 this year—a beautiful picture of one John Tory on it, and, I might add, a quote from Mr. Tory himself: "All municipalities must have long-term contingency plans for the management of waste to safeguard the environment and public health."

It seems that we've had some revelation here. If you'd like to suggest to us what communities in Ontario you think should be taking that trash, you just let us know over here.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Stop the clock.

Leader of the Opposition, final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** This is an important occasion for the member to be answering his first question, but I must say it was a very, very poor start, because the fact of the matter is, to the member, I will name four communities that need to have plans. It is your obligation and the Premier's obligation, and the question is to the Premier. Let's start with the government requiring, as it's mandated to do, plans from Toronto, York, Peel and Durham, which is what I asked for.

Premier, your government has been in office for two long years now. In those two years you've done nothing except to sit on a report for eight months about garbage in this province. You haven't developed a plan, you

haven't required anybody else to develop a plan, nor have you done anything to really embrace the new technologies in this area. You've done nothing. Don't you think it's time that you gave yourself and everyone else involved, including those communities, a real deadline by which they have to come forward with a plan as to what we're going to do?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** The McGuinty government has done more in the last two years than the Leader of the Opposition's party did in eight years. Your bright idea was that Toronto should take its trash, put it on a train, go up 600 kilometres and dump it in a lake, and you're coming in here and telling us that we don't have a plan?

We have an amazing plan. The first thing we tell municipalities is that we remind them, as all parties have agreed in this House forever, that waste is a municipal issue. The responsibility of our ministry is, if requirements come before us, solutions come before us, that we will take a look at that and we'll be expeditious in our reply. Because of that, new landfill sites have been approved in this province in the last two years. Perhaps you're unaware of that. Given the Tory tiny researchers around here, there are a lot of things you're unaware of.

But I want to say that it's nice to see that Adam Vaughan has lit a fire under the Leader of the Opposition today.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is to the Premier. Premier, in May you promised, and I quote, "an open and public debate on nuclear power." Today you acknowledge that you have already signed a private nuclear deal with Bruce Power for more than \$4.25 billion. Nuclear power is expensive and unreliable, with serious concerns about nuclear safety, storage of nuclear waste, and profit-driven private operators. Premier, what happened to your promise of an open and public debate?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I thank the member for the question. Let me just say that it's important to understand the context in which we find ourselves. Over the course of the next 15 years we are required, as a province, to replace, renew or refurbish some 25,000 megawatts of generation. That's one huge challenge.

I'm pleased to say that, as a government, we have grabbed the energy bull by the horns. We are the most active jurisdiction in all of North America. Like my friend, I would love it if we lived in a world where we could rely entirely on solar, wind power and hydro-electric, but we live in this world, not that one. So we are absolutely determined to leave no stone unturned when it comes to ensuring that we have in place a reliable supply of clean, responsibly priced, reasonably priced electricity.

This deal that we're doing with Bruce Power is a fair deal. It is a reasonable deal. It has been approved by fairness oversight. It's a matter that we also return to the Auditor General for the province of Ontario. In fact, the



contract is on-line now. It's over 200 pages. We've been very open, very public, very transparent.

1450

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, the question was about what happened to the promise you made to the people of Ontario about an open and public debate.

Now, as for your deal for privatized nuclear power, it is a sweetheart deal for Bruce Power. OPG says that nuclear power costs about four and half cents a kilowatt hour to produce, but your private deal with Bruce Power will give them 6.3 cents plus inflation. That's 33% more for this private, profit-driven nuclear operator.

Premier, Ontario families and Ontario industries are already paying a lot more on their hydro bills because of your broken promises and your electricity mistakes. How do you justify making them pay 33% more for privatized nuclear power?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The price of this deal is 6.3 cents per kilowatt hour. It has been, since January of this year, averaging 6.7 cents per kilowatt hour, so we think this is a fair deal in the circumstances. Everybody would like to have lower-priced electricity. We'd like to find ourselves in a position where, frankly, this work could have been started some eight or 10 years ago. But it wasn't, so here we are, and we are determined to get the job done.

In addition to this particular arrangement that we're entering into with Bruce Power, we have done much by way of insuring that we've already brought some 2,200 megawatts of new generation on-line. We have 9,000 more megawatts in the pipeline, 1,500 of which are going to be represented by this particular arrangement. This is the kind of arrangement which we have spent a great deal of time deliberating. There are no easy answers when it comes to generating new electricity in the province of Ontario, but I'm convinced at the end of the day that this is fair, it is reasonable and it protects the interests of ratepayers.

**Mr. Hampton:** The Premier says that this is a good deal for ratepayers, but if the private nuclear deal at the Bruce goes over budget—and nuclear projects always go over budget—then hydro consumers will have to pick up half the cost overrun. If the project goes over by \$2.5 billion, which is not unheard of, hydro's consumers pay another \$1 billion. That makes your \$4.25-billion deal into a \$5.25-billion deal. Premier, why are you forcing ordinary families to pay for cost overruns by a profit-driven private nuclear plant?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Just so we have a good understanding of our recent history in this regard, ratepayers were required to pick up 100% of the \$1-billion cost overrun when it came to the Pickering reactor retrofit. What we have managed to do is to shift 50% of potential overruns to the private sector. In an ideal world we would love to have been able to shift 100% of the cost overruns. One of the things we had done—and it was in the background information that was put out today—is that we had CIBC act as an overseer. They compared this particular arrangement with, I believe, some 18 others,

typical deals, similar deals, in North America and perhaps other parts of the world as well. They said that this was fair, it was in keeping with standards and that this was fair again to both ratepayers and taxpayers. This is not easy for us, to ensure that we have a reliable supply of electricity, but I can tell you we are determined to make that happen for the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** Premier, yes, I'm sure that CIBC believes this is a great deal for the private, profit-driven nuclear operator. There were cost overruns at Pickering, but Pickering didn't cost in the neighbourhood of \$6.5 billion, which is where you're headed here.

It's interesting to read the briefing note from Trans-Canada, because they say that the McGuinty government's going to give them a \$60-million reduction on the lease costs every year. So over a 20-year deal, that's another \$1.2 billion more for a profit-driven private nuclear operator. No wonder CIBC thinks this is such a great deal. You're shovelling money out the door to a private, profit-driven nuclear operator. Premier, how do you justify giving a profit-driven private nuclear operator another \$1.2 billion that you don't even refer to in your press release?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I'm pleased to respond to the honourable member's question. I have to tell you, I just started reading a new book and I got to page 18, where they spoke about, "I'm not ideologically opposed to private power." I wonder who wrote that particular book.

We have to replace 25,000 megawatts of new supply by the year 2020. Our government has a plan to provide safe, clean, reliable energy, and we will do it three ways: We will build, we will refurbish and maximize what we've got, and we will create a culture of conservation. We will ask all Ontarians to work with us to do it.

I can assure you that at 6.3 cents, when the current price from January to October is 6.8 cents, is a good deal for Ontario, in addition to the fact that \$4.25 billion will not be borne, as the \$10 billion was, as three times what Pickering cost—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** I'm not sure what the answer was. The question was about, how do you justify giving this profit-driven private nuclear company a further \$1.2 billion, and you don't even refer to it in your press release?

Do you know what is really galling here? When you read the fine print, this doesn't even provide new supply. Under the fine print, if Bruce A units 1 and 2 come on-line in 2009—and that's a big "if"—then units 3 and 4 will come down for further refurbishment. This doesn't add new supply. If these come on-line, the other ones come down. As for all of your statements about 9,000 megawatts of new supply, here again it's not true.

How do you justify a \$6.5-billion deal for a profit-driven private nuclear operator when people don't—

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked. Minister.

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** Let me talk a little bit about that 9,000. We have clean energy supply and demand

side at 1,955 megawatts; the Niagara tunnel at 200 megawatts; first renewable, 395 megawatts; the second renewable RFP is 200 megawatts; and the third RFP is 1,000 megawatts; replacement of Thunder Bay, 310 megawatts; cogen, 1,000; downtown Toronto, 500; west GTA, 1,000; and demand side at 250. This is in addition to 1,500 megawatts of new supply. If the member did read the fine print, he'd know that it's to put a new steam generator in, and that it's a normal practice throughout the process of a nuclear plant to deal with outages.

**Mr. Hampton:** The McGuinty government refers to new supply, as changing Thunder Bay over to gas-fired as new supply. It simply replaces old supply. You refer to 1,000 new megawatts in the west of the GTA. Every day when I pick up the paper, I find more of those so-called new gas-fired generating stations falling off the page. Then you say that Bruce Power A refurbishment of units 1 and 2 is new supply, but if 3 and 4 come down, it isn't new supply. This is \$6.5 billion for the hydro ratepayers of the province, and there's no new supply.

I ask again, what happened to the Premier's promise, made only six months ago, of a full, open public debate about nuclear power?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** The Ontario Power Authority, which was given instructions under Bill 100, is in fact conducting consultations now on this particular issue. That report will be coming to the ministry by December 1. We are dealing with an existing contract that is in place until the year 2018, with an additional 25-year option. We started these discussions after Bruce did their feasibility study about a year ago.

1500

## CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Today in the members' gallery, we are joined by 25 cancer patients from our province, who earlier at our Queen's Park press conference made an impassioned plea to both you and your government to fix a gap that exists in access to cancer treatment in our province, which differentiates between those services received by oral chemotherapy and those that are received by intravenous chemotherapy.

After Health Canada approves any new cancer drug, or any drug, for that matter, Ontario conducts its own review, as you well know. Until it is completed, your ministry has a process that will make exemption to cover the costs of oral drugs as recommended by an oncologist through this section 8 process. This, in effect, creates two classes of cancer patients in our province.

Minister, will you please consider having an exemption and an approval process for oral chemotherapy? Why is it that you have it for oral chemotherapy, but you have no application process to your ministry for coverage of intravenous chemotherapy treatment in our province?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I had the chance to speak to this issue somewhat at estimates with the honourable mem-

ber. I recently indicated, "Yes, indeed," to his question of will we take a look at processes designed to continue to build on our capacity to fund cancer drugs in our province.

It's of note that our new drug budget related to cancer since we came to office, a budget that is administered by Cancer Care Ontario, has more than doubled. I think this stands as our commitment to make sure that Ontario patients are receiving access to those drugs that are deemed to be clinically efficacious. In an environment where new drugs are coming on-line all the time, we need to continue to make sure that we have a process that builds in equitable response with science-based, evidence-based decision-making. But to the honourable member's direct question of will we take a look at this, I indicated to him at estimates that we would, and I'm happy to reassert that today in the House.

**Mr. Jackson:** This review is months and months away, and you're not listening to the basic question being asked by cancer patients who are here today. Carolyn Henry from the London North Centre riding, who has multiple myeloma, stated earlier that today it will be costing her approximately \$35,000, and she will pay thousands more to have the drug administered in a private clinic. "This will put my family into severe financial distress." This is happening today. The courageous Suzanne Aucoin from the St. Catharines riding, who has colorectal cancer and has been travelling to Buffalo, spent US\$65,000 and will return next week with her chequebook for treatment of a drug that's today approved by Health Canada. Dr. Donna Reece at Princess Margaret Hospital said, "As an oncologist, it's painful to watch patients die on waiting lists when treatment for some with long-term remission is available."

Minister, this is simply a policy decision for you to make. Will you create a matching section 8 policy approval process so that those patients who need intravenous chemotherapy treatment, life-saving treatment, will be able to apply and not have to—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Minister?

**Hon. George Smitherman:** I think it would be helpful for the public discussion to make members and people listening aware that no cancer agency in Canada has provided full public funding for this drug. We are working very hard, consistent with the necessity of equitable response, and also evidence-based decision-making, to move this quickly through a process, working alongside the DQTC and alongside a Cancer Care Ontario subcommittee.

We recognize, of course, that the paramountcy for patients is access to any and all treatment that is designed to have some benefit. It is our responsibility, in a world where more and more products of that nature are available every day, to make sure that we're using a process that provides an equitable response, based on evidence. We're doing that quickly. I think we've demonstrated our commitment by more than doubling those resources.



But to the member's question with respect to process, I indicated to him previously, and I've indicated again today, that that's something we're very keen to take a look at, and very much appreciate his interest.

### WASTE DISPOSAL

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** A question for the Premier. Premier, back to the garbage issue, and I hope this time you don't dump the question, so to speak, on the parliamentary assistant, who recycled tired old answers which were no answers at all.

The US House of Representatives could soon vote to allow states to prohibit the import of foreign waste. Within a mere 90 days' notice from Michigan and less than six months of available landfill capacity, the GTA is teetering on the brink of a garbage crisis. What is your plan if Michigan closes the border to GTA garbage?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the parliamentary assistant.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** I find it awfully interesting today for the member to be speaking about this issue, because I have two contradictory messages, right here today in the public record. Today, I note that you sent out a press release from Mr. Hampton: "The New Democrats accuse Ontario's Liberal government of negligence for not developing a strategy to deal with Toronto's trash." I also see today in his interview with Mr. Urquhart at the Toronto Star, "We have to make communities and regions responsible for their own development and for their own waste." So you two have a little conclave and then let us know what's going on.

**Ms. Churley:** Parliamentary assistant, that was a sad, sad answer to a growing crisis in the GTA. You must take this seriously and not keep playing games with it. And let me say this: It's your government, not municipalities, that fumbled the ball. You promised to ban organic wastes in landfills—no action. You were responsible for instituting used oil, electronic waste and tire recycling programs—no action. You issued a discussion paper in June of 2004 on how to achieve your promised 60% waste diversion rate, yet we're nearing the end of 2005, a potential garbage crisis, and there's still no action from you. Where is your plan, which is your responsibility, to divert 60% of the province's waste from landfill?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I couldn't disagree more with the member. And it really is nice to see you here today. I know that you have other engagements in this city, but glad to have you here. I can tell you that the McGuinty government has been—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. You know that it is out of order to refer to a member's absence from this place. I'm sure you'll correct that.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I withdraw, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize.

What I want to talk about is that I think it's unfair to characterize this government as one that has been doing nothing about waste diversion since we formed a govern-

ment. Within one month of being here, we approved the blue box program, a program that the previous government spent eight years deciding not to do. And now we make sure that industry covers half of the cost of each municipality's requirement into the blue box plan. Our commitment, the 60% diversion—and I might add that today is the beginning of Waste Reduction Week here in this province. I was at an event this morning. That is the future for this province. The McGuinty government embraces those changes. We have said to people repeatedly, and led by example, about the need for us to make sure that we're diverting electronic waste, something that I don't recall any other previous government approving in this province, though you had a chance.

### RENEWABLE FUELS

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh):** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. Minister, on June 17 of this year I had the opportunity of standing at the site of the proposed ethanol plant in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–Charlottenburgh and highlight our government's ethanol growth fund initiative to the Seaway Valley Farmers Co-operative. This initiative of \$520 million over 12 years is a boon for the ethanol industry. The plant in my riding, when built, will produce roughly 69 million litres of ethanol fuel annually, which will help our government reach its announced goal of 10% ethanol at the pumps by 2010. I was delighted to share with the Seaway Valley Farmers Co-operative the details of your announcement of Friday, October 7, when you indicated that the ethanol growth fund is now accepting applications. They were pleased to hear this announcement. Minister, would you explain to us how parties interested in benefiting from the ethanol growth fund can apply for grants?

1510

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** It is an important question because it is an important initiative. I also want to commend the honourable member for the good work and advocacy that he has had, particularly with the Seaway Valley Farmers Energy Co-operative.

First of all, on October 7, the government did publish the guidelines for our ethanol growth fund. It's important to state publicly that this fund is available for individuals, corporations, farm co-operatives—the one that has been identified by the honourable member. Proponents who are interested in the fund can visit the OMAFRA site to gain the details on the components of the initiative.

Funds allocated under the Ontario ethanol growth fund are for both capital assistance, operating components. There are other parts of the fund that I hope I'll have time to respond to in my supplementary.

Finally, I think it's very important to identify here today that proposals must be received by November 10, 2005, and the results will be announced the third week of December 2005.

**Mr. Brownell:** Minister, thank you for your assurances and information. I know that you have been a big



supporter of the project for some time in my riding, having met with the Seaway Valley Farmers Energy Co-operative on September 15.

With its ethanol initiative, this government has demonstrated its commitment to the environment and has shown foresight in planning for a stable source of fuel. As you know, my riding is struggling to deal with a series of plant closures and job layoffs that have had a tremendous impact not just on the local economy, but the very livelihood of my communities.

The ethanol plant to be built in Cornwall will create jobs, both directly and indirectly, jobs we truly need. Just as the one-time grant component of the ethanol growth fund will benefit my riding of Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh, so will its various elements be of value to other parts of the province.

Minister, could you explain the various components of the fund as you mentioned in your first answer and how they will be of use to Ontarians.

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** As the honourable member has identified, the ethanol growth fund will be an investment in rural communities across Ontario but also a very important priority for our government. This will also be an investment in our environment.

I'd like to speak specifically to the four components of the growth fund. There is of course a capital component that will assist those proponents to invest in capital for the production of ethanol. There will be operating grants that will be available from 2007 until 2017 to promote ethanol production and help the industry manage the fluctuating market that can be experienced in that industry. There is the independence fund that will provide financial support to the independent gasoline distributors who currently blend ethanol, and they may need some assistance to meet the requirements of the new standards. Finally, there is the research and development fund, which we believe is going to help farmers as well as other industries as we work toward a bio-based economy.

#### TEACHER MISCONDUCT

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** My question is to the Minister of Education. On December 9 of this year, Philip Louis King of Chatham will be eligible to teach in Ontario's public school system again, this despite being found guilty of professional misconduct. That professional misconduct, as you are aware, related to his habit of viewing child pornography on the Internet from a laptop in his classroom, and this despite professional opinions that restoring a teaching certificate to Mr. King is, and I quote, "too big a risk to take." Minister, will you give us your assurance that Philip Louis King will never teach in Ontario classrooms again?

**Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education):** To the member opposite, I understand that he is raising a case that requires serious consideration. We are not at liberty to discuss an individual case here. We're aware of media reports of the names that were raised. I will say that I've made inquiries to the Ontario College of Teachers, which was established by the previous government to

do the exact kind of role that it has in this case, which is to review the merits of the case and take away licences from teachers who don't warrant them, which they have done in many, many cases to do with Internet porn, not in the sense that there have been that many cases, but in most of those cases it has resulted in a permanent suspension of the licences, of the few that there have been.

What I would say is that we in the ministry have made inquiries of the Ontario College of Teachers. We have a meeting with them scheduled, in terms of discussing a number of issues. One of the issues will be our trying to understand whether the media reports, in general, have credence. You will know that there are a number of months, some of the publicly reported facts say, before the person will be reinstated. I will give the undertaking to the member opposite that we will make certain that all the procedures that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Klees:** Minister, you will know that it's more than just media events that were reported. There is a decision by the Ontario College of Teachers that is very public.

I have a quote for you to take into consideration as you review this. Detective Sergeant Paul Gillespie, who is the head of Toronto's child porn unit, said the following: "Every one of these pictures represents a child being tortured..." He goes on to say that restoring the teaching certificates of such individuals is "too big a risk to take."

Minister, it is within your purview, it is your responsibility, to ensure the decision that was made, which is only a two-year suspension, is not adequate. You, as Minister of Education, can assure this House and people across the province that this individual, Philip Louis King, will never again teach in Ontario schools. Will you do that?

**Hon. Mr. Kennedy:** The assurance I will give this House is that this government will take every measure to protect not just students, but young people in this province, from the scourge of anyone who would like to prey on the vulnerable children of our society in any way, shape or form.

In respect to this particular question, I would note that the Robins report made many recommendations which the member opposite's government declined to implement. This government is bringing those recommendations forward. We'll make sure that there is a complete set of protections in place in our schools to ensure that there is no chance—at least the minimum of chances—that anyone could be exposed to that.

With respect to the case in question, I've given the member opposite my undertaking. It will be followed through in a timely manner to make sure that the procedures to protect children are ensuring that no person who could be a risk will be in a classroom.

#### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Over the weekend, another

Toronto citizen, a TTC driver, was shot. He is the latest victim of gun violence. Your response so far has been to hold some meetings and conduct a press conference. Premier, when are you going to take action and make the significant social and community investments that are needed to address gun violence issues?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'll refer this to the Attorney General.

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** Obviously the Premier has spoken, I think, for all members of the House in expressing our concern for this TTC driver. I can tell this House that I've asked the victim services secretariat within the Ministry of the Attorney General to provide to this victim the full array of services that are appropriate in this case. In this case, it is appropriate for the victim services secretariat to contact the union because of privacy interests, and we have done that to make sure we're working with the union to ensure that all services are available to that individual.

With respect to what this government is doing and has done with respect to gun violence, it started at the beginning of the mandate with the establishment of the guns-and-gangs task force, which has resulted in literally hundreds of arrests, the seizure of more than 100 firearms, and some convictions as well. We have been on the file of gun violence from day one, and I'm happy to expand on this in our supplementary.

1520

**Mr. Hampton:** What people have seen is that this government has been missing in action on this issue. Let me be clear: A number of groups and organizations have met with this government, both collectively and individually, and they have outlined for the McGuinty government what needs to be done. They've outlined the fact that you have too many youth who do not have after-school opportunities, you have too many youth who do not have summer job opportunities, you have too many youth who have been kicked out of school, you have too many youth who do not have the opportunities in terms of job training or work.

They're asking this question: When is the McGuinty government going to stop conducting press conferences and when are you going to make the significant social and community investments to address the real issues with these problems?

**Hon. Michael Bryant:** Well, the member's quite right: This is a very serious issue, and there is no doubt that we have to do everything we can, not only to deal on the enforcement side and the prevention side, but also to deal with at-risk youths. That's why we made the investment of more than \$20 million in annual funding to keep those community schools open. That's why we made the investment of a youth-at-risk summer job initiative. That's why Toronto police services receives funding through the Minister of Community Safety for the PEACE project, which works with young people in the community to target gun violence. That's why we set up the pre-apprenticeship training programs and why we set

up the summer jobs program for at-risk youth. And that's why we made, in addition, a further commitment in the throne speech to ensure that we continue to make significant strides not only in addressing gun violence and preventing gun violence but in addressing the causes of gun violence.

## POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, the McGuinty government is making the most significant investment in post-secondary education in the last 40 years. The plan features \$1.5 billion in additional student support that will provide enhanced assistance to 135,000 students. The plan will see more students having access to higher-quality education. Minister, in addition to these investments, what has been done to ensure that students have an up-to-date, safe and rewarding learning environment? What has been done to ensure they have the equipment necessary to provide them for a globally competitive, knowledge-based society?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities):** I'd like to thank the member from Willowdale for the question and for his advocacy on behalf of students to ensure they have the type of safe, effective learning environment that he's speaking about.

In the spring, the McGuinty government flowed \$250 million extra in capital and equipment funding support to our universities and colleges. This money is strengthening the foundations for learning. I've had the opportunity over the past several months to tour campuses to see what the colleges and universities are doing with this money.

For example, I've been to Conestoga College, where I saw that they'd invested in new advanced classrooms to ensure more effective learning, but they'd also invested in energy-efficient equipment to ensure that they can save money while learning, and that money they've saved can actually be reinvested in the classroom.

I've also been to Guelph, and I've seen the new learning and growth environment they have, which, more effective for their experiments, saves money for more classroom—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Zimmer:** Thank you, Minister. I'm gratified to hear how your ministry has invested in the coming generation. I commend you for this investment.

Specifically, I would like to know what capital money has been invested in Seneca College, whose home is in my riding of Willowdale. Can you tell me what specific improvements students at Seneca College will see?

**Hon. Mr. Bentley:** I'm not surprised the question is about Seneca College. I hear regularly from the member for Willowdale about Seneca College. I am pleased to announce that of those funds, \$9.2 million was invested in Seneca College.



For example, they've invested in a new teaching facility for, among other programs, veterinary technician programs. They've also invested \$2.2 million for new flight simulators for the aviation and flight technology course. But it doesn't end there. They've invested in a highly accelerated life test environmental chamber. Seneca College is leading many jurisdictions in the type of advanced programming that they can provide. They've also invested heavily to ensure that their classrooms have the most up-to-date electronic equipment. It just shows the type of uses that our colleges and universities are putting this funding to, and I thank Seneca College.

### FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question is for the Premier. The forestry sector has been facing a looming crisis for the past two years. Your Minister of Natural Resources has made two announcements to address the crisis. The first was in June, when he released the report that he commissioned, the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness; the second earlier this month. Neither announcement adequately responds to the critical core competitiveness issues facing the forestry sector. Why does the province continue to ignore the recommendation of the minister's own expert forestry council?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I thank the member opposite for the question, and he raises a very important, very legitimate issue. The forestry sector is experiencing unprecedented challenges as a result of globalization of the industry. That globalization is leading to consolidations and it's leading to job losses, not just here in Ontario but indeed throughout North America and much of the world. I'm pleased with the response that we've been able to put together with the forestry sector.

The first phase of our three-step response was to put in place a \$350-million loan guarantee program. The second step was a \$150-million forest sector prosperity fund. That is designed specifically to leverage new investments, including value-added manufacturing and co-generation technology. What we want to do is make this fund available so that industry here in Ontario can go through the necessary transition to put themselves on a stronger and more sustainable footing going forward.

**Mr. Miller:** Thank you, Premier. I'm glad you brought up what you've done so far, because I'll respond to that.

Today I met with Glen Morrison, president of local Steelworkers union 1330 from Abitibi Consolidated and the Kenora mill. The future of this mill is at stake, as are jobs in the community. In fact, this is such an important issue that this delegation is here at Queen's Park for the week. I'd like to inform you of how your minister's recent announcement, the one you just alluded to, has been received by others in the sector. Cec Makowski of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union called the announcements "pathetically anemic" and "nowhere near what is required to turn the industry around." The Ontario Forest Industries Association said

that "critical core competitive issues are not addressed." Every day I read in the northern papers about another paper machine or mill shutting down in a small community. In my own riding, letters are pouring in from families who are in fear for their livelihoods.

Premier, the government's plan has lowered delivered wood costs by US\$1 per cubic metre; it's just not good enough. When is your government going to act on the recommendations of the expert council?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I marvel at this new alliance here. I wish them all the best, I really do. But let me tell you a bit more about our \$680-million strategy, in addition to that \$150-million forest sector prosperity fund. We have put in place \$28 million annually to help support the maintenance of primary access roads, which had been downloaded on to the sector by the NDP government. We're devoting \$10 million to an annual inventory program and \$1 million for an annual Ontario wood promotion program.

The first step was the loan guarantee program; the second step was our broader strategy. There's a third step, and it's an important one, and I'd ask my friend opposite to take up this cause as well. Now that we here, the taxpayers of Ontario, have put in place this plan, we are asking the federal government to come to the table and to match the support that we've put in place.

1530

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** My question is to the Premier, and it's a very simple one. You will know that post-Katrina, we saw gas prices shoot through the roof to almost \$1.50 a litre in some cases. I've got a simple question: Would you agree with me that there's been excessive profit-taking on the part of the gas industry in Ontario as well as in North America?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** Speaker, the Minister of Government Services.

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** Just to remind the House of the step we took, and I think it was the appropriate step: We notified the federal Competition Bureau of our serious concerns with what was happening with gas prices in the province of Ontario, where we saw dramatic changes in prices from area to area. We saw the price go down more quickly in other jurisdictions.

The member would be aware that the federal government has acknowledged that the Competition Bureau probably needs more teeth; they probably need some change in legislation; they probably need some tools to do a better job in dealing with this matter.

We, on behalf of the people of Ontario, took I think the appropriate step. The federal government has acknowledged that it needs to take some action, and I understand that they plan to do that.

**Mr. Bisson:** Listen, I've just got to say I'm hearing "tools"; I'm hearing "federal government"; I'm hearing everything. That wasn't the question.



My question to the Premier was a very simple one. People were being hosed at the pumps. They were paying as much as \$1.50 a litre for the best part of September, post-Katrina. I repeat my question to you, Minister: Do you agree with me that the gas companies across this country have been doing excessive profit-taking when it comes to the price of gas?

**Hon. Mr. Phillips:** I will repeat what I said earlier: The federal government has acknowledged that the Competition Bureau probably needs some additional teeth to deal with this matter, and that there may be some cases where the gas companies have not dealt fairly with this.

I'll tell you what we've done, but I'll tell you what we will not do. We won't do what you did when you were in office, and that is raise the gas taxes in the province of Ontario by 30%. That won't happen. We won't gouge the people of Ontario on gas taxes like you did in the time you were in office. That won't happen, for sure.

### EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, earlier this year, you launched an employment support initiative called Jobs Now, an initiative that was piloted across Ontario, including the city of Ottawa. Jobs Now is a positive way to restore integrity to social assistance. I know that in my riding, where there are people on welfare who want to work, finding and keeping a job can be very difficult. I hope Jobs Now has changed that.

Minister, have there been improvements in aiding those on social assistance to find jobs through the JobsNow pilot? More specifically, has the pilot project in Ottawa seen people on social assistance gain employment?

**Hon. Sandra Papatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** Thank you so much for this. I know you have a particular interest in the Ottawa area and in helping people who are on welfare return to work.

What was very special about this pilot that we launched last spring was that we focused on six areas—northern, rural, urban communities—where we could look at the kind of supports needed to move people back into the workforce, but we specifically targeted individuals who have been on the system for 12 months or more, what we would classify as “harder to serve” because they've been out of the workforce for so long.

We are very happy to see the preliminary responses. I am getting regular feedback from all six communities and will be happy to share a fulsome report in very short order, in particular for Ottawa. Both you and the mayor of Ottawa are very happy to see this renewed focus on making welfare a real program—not just workfare, which was a failure by the last government—that returns people, in fact, to working for a living, and assistance to move people into the workforce.

**Mr. McNeely:** Thank you, Minister. Your attitude toward those Ontarians who need help the most is quite refreshing.

We must never forget how important it is that we continue to help those who need it most. Minister, what plans does your ministry have to move forward with JobsNow?

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** As I mentioned earlier, we are looking for a very fulsome report of the program, which is to run up to 18 months or beyond to get some good results on that pilot, as it is operating in six different sites, including Ottawa.

I will tell you, though, that in addition what we are doing is looking at our programs, and with the help of our parliamentary assistant, Deb Matthews, who did a very good report on social assistance as it relates to employment especially, it has resulted in a significant decrease to the barriers that exist in the welfare system, things like the extension of our health benefits for a further six months as people move into the workplace, a significant barrier that the Conservatives put up that we are tearing down.

In addition, a special increase for the first time in 18 years in the child care component deductions for people moving into the workforce, from \$300 to \$600. In addition, a number of those barriers that we are targeting where we will say to people, “We know you need help getting back into the workforce, and we as a government are prepared to offer that assistance.”

### PETITIONS

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

“Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

“Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments; and

“Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of patients.”

This petition has my signature and support.

## AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that was signed by dozens of people who were at a rally for autism that I spoke at this morning in Sarnia, and I want to read it into the record. It says:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas children with autism who have reached the age of six years are no longer being discharged from their preschool autism program; and

"Whereas these children should be getting the best special education possible in the form of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) within the school system; and

"Whereas there are approximately 700 preschool children with autism across Ontario who are required to wait indefinitely for placement in the program, and there are also countless school-age children that are not receiving the support they require in the school system; and

"Whereas this situation has an impact on the families, extended families and friends of all of these children; and

"Whereas, as stated on the Web site for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 'IBI can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Its objective is to decrease the frequency of challenging behaviours, build social skills and promote language development';

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fund the treatment of IBI for all preschool children awaiting services. We also petition the Legislature of Ontario to fund an education program in the form of ABA in the school system."

Clearly, I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** I have a petition regarding Credit Valley Hospital capital improvements.

"Whereas on August 22, 2005, the government of Ontario, through the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal, announced that the Credit Valley Hospital's phase 2 expansion project will proceed, with construction starting in 2007; and

"Whereas the new A and H blocks at Credit Valley Hospital will dramatically improve service and care to the approximately 4,800 babies delivered each year at the Credit Valley Hospital, improving a facility designed to handle 2,700 births annually; and

"Whereas the expanded capacity will expedite the movement of acutely ill admitted emergency patients on to a nursing unit where they will be cared for in a timely and professional manner, decrease wait times for surgical patients requiring in-patient care, and also motivate local donors to support our community's hospital;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Credit Valley Hospital, its staff, patients, donors and community thank the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal

for the government of Ontario's solid commitment to the care and well-being of the growing municipalities served by the Credit Valley Hospital in western Mississauga."

I've affixed my signature as well, Mr. Speaker.

1540

SERVICES FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I won the lottery.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

"Whereas quality supports are dependent upon the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to community agencies in the developmental services sector, to address critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

This is signed by many of my constituents. I affix my signature as well and give it to Trevor.

## HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition signed by hundreds of people from Guelph, Cambridge and Kitchener against P3 hospitals. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas all hospitals since the inception of public medicare in Canada have been non-profit;

"Whereas 'public-private partnership' (P3) hospitals turn over democratic community control to international investors, making a public service into a commodity sold for profit;

"Whereas worldwide evidence is that private (P3) hospitals lead to doctor, nurse, staff and bed cuts in hospitals in order to make room for profit taking, consultant fees, higher borrowing costs and outrageous executive salaries;

"Whereas private (P3) hospitals hide information about the use of tax dollars by claiming 'commercial secrecy' when they privatize public institutions;

"Whereas the higher costs, user fees, two-tier services and culture of private (P3) hospitals risk the future sustainability of our public medicare system;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:



"We call on the government of Ontario to stop all current and future 'public-private partnership' (P3) hospital deals and return full ownership, operation, management and delivery of hospital services to non-profit hands, and develop a plan to fund new hospitals through public finance, clearly excluding the privatization of hospital services."

I agree with the petitioners. I have affixed my signature to this.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I have the pleasure today to introduce a petition on behalf of Ms. Franca Mancini, who lives at 29 Bowman Street in Georgetown, Ontario.

"Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Credit Valley Hospital Capital Improvements

"Whereas on August 22, 2005, the government of Ontario, through the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal, announced that the Credit Valley Hospital's phase 2 expansion project will proceed, with construction starting in 2007; and

"Whereas the new A and H blocks at Credit Valley Hospital will dramatically improve service and care to the approximately 4,800 babies delivered each year at the Credit Valley Hospital, improving a facility designed to handle 2,700 births annually; and

"Whereas the expanded capacity will expedite the movement of acutely ill admitted emergency patients on to a nursing unit where they will be cared for in a timely and professional manner, decrease wait times for surgical patients requiring in-patient care, and also motivate local donors to support our community's hospital;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Credit Valley Hospital, its staff, patients, donors and community thank the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal for the government of Ontario's solid commitment to the care and well-being of the growing municipalities served by the Credit Valley Hospital in western Mississauga."

### QUEENSWAY CARLETON HOSPITAL

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean-Carleton):** I have been getting literally hundreds of petitions every week which read as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Queensway Carleton Hospital is one of the most efficient hospitals in the country;

"Whereas the Queensway Carleton Hospital's priority should be providing excellent patient care, not money for Paul Martin's Liberal government;

"Whereas the number of senior citizens served by the Queensway Carleton Hospital is growing rapidly in the west end of Ottawa and Nepean;

"Whereas the federal Liberal government led by Paul Martin has a surplus potentially as high as \$10 billion;

"Whereas all provincial political parties in Ontario have acknowledged the significant fiscal imbalance;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario Legislature call upon the federal Liberal government to immediately cancel its plans to dramatically increase the rent for the land now being used by the Queensway Carleton Hospital, and that the hospital be charged only \$1 rent per year."

I am pleased to support and sign this petition.

### OPTOMETRISTS

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that's been signed by dozens of constituents in my riding that reads as follows:

"Whereas the last funding agreement between the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ontario Association of Optometrists (OAO) expired March 31, 2000; and

"Whereas the optometric fees for OHIP-insured services remain unchanged since 1989; and

"Whereas the lack of any fee increase for 15 years has created a crisis situation for optometrists; and

"Whereas fees for OHIP services do not provide for fair or reasonable compensation for the professional services of optometrists, in that they no longer cover the costs of providing eye examinations; and

"Whereas it is in the best interests of patients and the government to have a new funding agreement for insured services that will ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are able to receive the eye care they need;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care resume negotiations immediately with the OAO and appoint a mediator to help with the negotiation process in order to ensure that optometrists can continue to provide quality eye care services to patients in Ontario."

I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

### PERMIS POUR LA VENTE DE BOISSONS ALCOOLIQUES

**M. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** J'ai une pétition provenant de quatre communautés dans la municipalité de La Nation.

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario:

« Attendu que les résidents de St-Bernardin, Fournier, St-Isidore et Riceville dans la municipalité de La Nation, comptant environ 11 000 habitants (villages et rurales), ne sont desservis que par trois dépanneurs sur une grande superficie de territoire en campagne;

« Attendu que les résidents doivent parcourir plusieurs kilomètres afin de s'approvisionner d'une bonne bouteille de vin et/ou de bière puisque cette marchandise n'est disponible que dans les grandes villes éloignées telles que Alexandria et/ou Vankleek Hill;



« Nous, les soussignés, présentons la pétition suivante à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Que le bureau des liqueurs de l'Ontario émette un permis pour la vente de bières et de vin au dépanneur Méthot-Leroux situé au 117 rue de l'Église, St-Bernardin, Ontario. »

J'y ajoute ma signature.

### HIGHWAY 26

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 was approved by MPP Jim Wilson and the previous PC government in 2000; and

“Whereas a number of horrific fatalities and accidents have occurred on the old stretch of Highway 26; and

“Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 is critical to economic development and job creation in Simcoe–Grey;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Liberal government stop the delay of the Highway 26 redevelopment and act immediately to ensure that the project is finished on schedule, to improve safety for area residents and provide economic development opportunities and job creation in Simcoe–Grey.”

Obviously I agree with the petition and I've signed it.

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition about gas prices, which reads as follows:

“Whereas the average price of gasoline has skyrocketed to over \$1 a litre, the highest price at the pumps in Ontario history;

“Whereas high gas prices are causing great hardship for ordinary motorists, small business owners and industry;

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals promised to take action to keep gas prices low;

“Whereas the McGuinty Liberals have broken that promise and have done nothing to help ordinary families getting hosed at the pumps;

“We petition the Ontario government to immediately pass Bill 74, the Keep Your Promises at the Pump Act, which would make the Liberals keep their promise to freeze gas prices for 90 days, and Bill 93, the Keep Your Promise on the Gas Price Watchdog Act, which would force the Liberals to keep their promise to establish a gas price watchdog to protect consumers from price gouging.”

I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

### VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo–Wellington):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas many volunteer fire departments in Ontario are strengthened by the service of double-hatter firefighters who work as professional, full-time firefighters and also serve as volunteer firefighters on their free time and in their home communities; and

“Whereas the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association has declared their intent to ‘phase out’ these double-hatter firefighters; and

“Whereas double-hatter firefighters are being threatened by the union leadership and forced to resign as volunteer firefighters or face losing their full-time jobs, and this is weakening volunteer fire departments in Ontario; and

“Whereas Waterloo—Wellington MPP Ted Arnott has introduced Bill 52, the Volunteer Firefighters Employment Protection Act, that would uphold the right to volunteer and solve this problem concerning public safety in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the provincial government express public support for MPP Ted Arnott's Bill 52 and willingness to pass it into law or introduce similar legislation that protects the right of firefighters to volunteer in their home communities on their own free time.”

This is signed by a significant number of constituents from the Grey-Bruce area.

1550

### QUEENSWAY CARLETON HOSPITAL

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have received a petition from concerned residents in Ottawa, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Queensway Carleton Hospital is one of the most efficient hospitals in the country;

“Whereas the Queensway Carleton Hospital's priority should be providing excellent patient care, not money for Paul Martin's Liberal government;

“Whereas the number of senior citizens served by the Queensway Carleton Hospital is growing rapidly in the west end of Ottawa and Nepean;

“Whereas the federal Liberal government led by Paul Martin has a surplus potentially as high as \$10 billion;

“Whereas all provincial political parties in Ontario have acknowledged the significant fiscal imbalance;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“We call on the federal Liberal government to immediately cancel its plans to dramatically increase the rent for the land now being used by the Queensway Carleton Hospital, and that the hospital be charged only \$1 rent per year.”

I agree with the petitioners, and I have affixed my signature to this.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Resuming the debate adjourned on Thursday, October 13, 2005, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin, as I did the other day—and I think it's appropriate in this debate—by extending a warm welcome to you, to congratulate you on your election to the Chair, and to extend my best wishes to all of our colleagues in all parties in this Legislature as we resume this new sitting of Parliament.

I would also like to thank His Honour for graciously opening this new legislative session. As for the content of the throne speech, I will be getting to that in more detail later, and I will have an amendment to move to the address in reply moved the other day. But we can certainly all agree that His Honour has set an outstanding example for this House and for Ontario generally, be it as an advocate for aboriginal literacy or be it as someone who is working hard to try to increase public information on mental health issues or a wide range of other issues. He remains a model of public service that I think we can all learn from.

Ontario remains a place of tremendous opportunity, a blessed place to live, especially when we see it against the backdrop of the trials and the tragedies that have happened elsewhere. Again, I would take a minute, as I did the other day, and join the leaders of the other parties in extending our condolences to the people in South Asian communities who have been the victims of the most recent tragedy we've seen this year, the earthquake that befell India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kashmir. I've had a chance to be at some events in the community where there's a huge amount of fundraising taking place, proving yet again the generosity that people have toward their neighbours, whether those neighbours live here or elsewhere. I'd repeat the idea I put forward the other day that the Ontario government consider a challenge grant that would match the donations of Ontarians in the third week after the federal challenge grant has run out, and look at that as a means of making sure we keep the interest high and raise as much money as we can.

These days, it's popular to cast Alberta as the major engine of Canadian prosperity. To that, I've always said, when I've been asked about it—as recently as last week—that right here in Ontario we have a prosperity creation machine that is every bit the match of anything else in Canada and is every bit the match, for that matter, of anything else in the world. There are 12 and a half million people here. They are people who have within them an incredible amount of expertise in a whole host of

areas. We have an education infrastructure and an education system that people have been through, and continue to go through. We have a resource base. We have a strong farm economy, although it's suffering at the moment, and I'll come back to that. But we have a strong agricultural base and great agricultural traditions in this province to build on.

While I would argue that it's every bit as powerful as what we hear a lot about in terms of the present opportunities in front of the province of Alberta, I think it's also fair to say that our prosperity creation machine has more moving parts. It requires more care and attention and more repeated and constant tune-ups if it's to stay functioning well and do what it is capable of doing. The people who are in charge of this prosperity creation machine that we call Ontario have to be focused, they have to be committed, and they have to be credible.

Part of the care and attention that our province needs and deserves, I would argue, to maintain its prosperity must include care and attention to the real needs of real people who today face some very real problems in their daily lives. I would argue that today this kind of credible leadership is sorely lacking. Indeed, I would suggest to you that the Liberals now find themselves in the midst of a credibility crisis.

It is not my intention to speak any more than necessary today on the circumstances surrounding the resignation of the former Minister of Finance, who deserves the full benefit of the doubt as afforded by the law. I hope for his sake and for the sake of the entire process that his name is cleared, and that it is cleared soon. But I would say this to you: The fact remains that even before this latest fiasco hit the news last week, this government and this Premier had already established a reputation for unaccountable government that broke the promises it made and that refuses to take responsibility for its many mistakes. Again, we saw an example of that nowhere better than in question period just this afternoon. I am sad to say that nothing in this last week's throne speech changed that reputation, and nothing in that throne speech is going to change that reputation.

If you were paying attention to the din of the Liberal caucus patting themselves on the back, all the throne speech contained, when you really looked at it, were 60 recycled, unfulfilled promises from the past, and eight new promises—I'll give them that; there were eight new promises. Many of those involved setting up new bureaucracy and finding new ways to put more people in place to tell people what to do and how to live their lives out there. Several of them, frankly, seemed to be more PR gimmicks than real, smart public policy that was really going to help us keep that prosperity going in the province of Ontario. Even the Premier himself, in speaking to the media, referred to them as "novelty" items. That's what he called them. He said the speech would have some novelty items in it—hardly the stuff that is going to help us build a province; hardly the stuff that is going to help people who are working harder and falling further behind at one and the same time. They don't need



novelty items. They need real help for real problems that real people face out there, and they did not get it from this government.

The very same throne speech commits to not less than five new levels of bureaucracy that will surely cost millions of more taxpayer dollars. I've travelled this province. I have been to 101 out of 103 constituencies in Ontario. I can assure you that in all of those travels I have heard people ask for lots of things—they've suggested lots of things the government should be doing in order to help them with their lives—and not once did I hear anybody ask for more layers of bureaucracy at a cost of hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money that belongs to and was earned by those very same people I was talking to.

So we did hear about the bureaucracy. We did hear about the novelty items and the gimmicks. What we did not hear in the throne speech was any kind of meaningful plan. There were no elements whatsoever of a meaningful plan to help the working families that are hurting right now.

Ontarians are hard-working people. They're smart people. They understand what it means to save, just to cite one example. Today, thousands of Ontario families are saving to send their kids to college. They're saving up for a family vacation they might take during the spring break next year. They're saving up for new clothes for the kids or repairs to the car. Some families may be saving for their first home or saving to fix the home that they already have. For years and years, hundreds and thousands of Ontario families have been saving up for a rainy day because they know—and it's part of what has made Ontario great; it's part of the values that we share—that saving up for a rainy day is the smart thing to do.

Today, the money these families have saved, the money they first worked hard to earn and then saved for the rainy day, that money is going to Dalton McGuinty and the Liberal government. That's where that money is going. It is going this Liberal government to spend and to waste and to throw at new programs and layers of bureaucracy—in particular, the latter—with zero accountability and zero planning. It's the worst possible thing that could happen to that money, to have it go from the hard workers who earned it to just be wasted and frittered away on these kinds of programs.

It's paying for the new bureaucracy. It's paying—because sometimes people understand the smaller stuff a little better—to spend \$1,000 to send a few bags of ice from Toronto down to Niagara Falls. It's paying for the 16 people who accompanied the Premier of this province from Toronto to Niagara Falls for our Premiers' meeting. So they're seeing it pay for a new bureaucracy, bags of ice, and 16 people going with the Premier of Ontario to a Premiers' meeting. Of course, we know what else it's paying for: It's going to pay the health tax.

1600

For the families paying higher electricity rates, with more electricity price increases on the way, the rainy day

is here. For the people who are paying twice as much in dollars in health tax this year as they did last year, the rainy day is here. For the families who will face higher home heating bills this winter, for the families that rely on a car to get to work or to get their kids to school and for the families facing the record gas prices that were discussed in this House this afternoon, the rainy day is here. For the families paying higher user fees imposed by this McGuinty Liberal government, for the families paying higher property taxes because of the inaction of this government and their so-called new municipal partnership program—which shafts municipalities right across the province, and by so doing, will shaft taxpayers right across this province—and for taxpayers who are forced to dig into their pockets to pay for their eye examinations, to pay for their visits to chiropractors and to pay for physiotherapy, the rainy day is here.

For all of those taxpayers, for all of those families, this money is going to a Premier who broke his promises to Ontarians, to a government that has proven that it cannot be trusted. There is absolutely no reason, I would argue, why anything that is found in this throne speech should be believed—not a word of it—because when we look back at what they said they would do and what they promised they would do, whether it was in their platform or in a previous throne speech, there is hardly anything there where they've done what they said they would do. Their word is just not to be trusted. Take, for example, page 4 of their election platform, where the Premier said that a Liberal government, if elected, would "give you better value for your money, while keeping taxes down."

I heard about this loud and clear when I was running in the by-election campaign last March in Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey. Voters on the doorstep told me time and time again—and it hasn't been confined to that, nor has it stopped there, because ever since then, as I've traveled across the province from constituency to constituency, town to town, county to county, city to city, they've told me over and over again, in almost the same words, "I'm getting 1.5%, 2%, 2.5% at work, and then I come home after a hard day's work and find my hydro bill there, and it's up 6%, 7%, 8%. I come home at the end of a hard day's work and I find my property tax bill there, and it's up 6%, 7% or 8%. I fill out my income tax return at the end of April, and I find there's this health tax there and that I'm going to have to pay twice as much when I fill it out in April 2006 as I did in April 2005."

They all basically have the same question. They pose it to me because I'm standing there, but it's really a question they're posing more to this government than they are to me, which is: "How are we expected to cope? How are we supposed to cope? How's our family going to cope?" with getting 2% and having bills that arrive for 6%, 7% and 8%—not just one—and most of them, in some way or another, under the control of this McGuinty Liberal government?

Those people, who are working so hard each and every day going off to do whatever they do, looked to the throne speech for the smallest indication, even the

smallest glimmer of hope, that this McGuinty Liberal government recognized what they're going through, recognized that they are having trouble keeping up. They would hope that the Liberals might recognize that even the tiniest little bit of help might be welcome, both as a sign of recognition that they know people are struggling but also as a tangible way of helping Ontarians. They recognize as well, and they hoped the throne speech would address this, that a part of the care and attention that the province of Ontario needs if it's going to be well run, if it's being to be prosperous, if it's going to be successful—a part of the care and attention that I mentioned earlier that Ontario needs to have on an ongoing basis—is care and attention to helping Ontarians cope to keep this province strong.

Any person who's trying to cope out there, I would argue, would be deeply disappointed when they watched this throne speech. What was in it for them? What was in it for the real lives of the real people who have real problems and who need real help and real results today? What was in it for them? They got absolutely nothing.

The Premier and his Liberal Party just don't understand how hard these Ontario families are finding it to get by and how much some help, any help, would mean to them as they go about trying to live their lives on a day-to-day basis.

So what might have been in the throne speech for these Ontario families? What might have been there?

Let's start with energy rebates. This government, the McGuinty Liberal government, has \$500 million sitting in its coffers booked as energy rebates that are owed to the people of Ontario for a year that ended quite a few months ago. That money is sitting in their accounts. We heard last week from the new Minister of Energy—God bless her—that there are some accounting issues that prevent that money from being sent out.

Well, I will say that one thing that should have been in the throne speech, and the Premier of this province, Mr. McGuinty, should have put it there: He should have said that those cheques will be mailed out and in the homes across this province, that people will have that money by October 31, no ifs, ands or buts about it. That's all there is to it.

Accounting issues are no excuse when it comes to returning to people their own money that the government is holding on to. Frankly, since they've delayed and delayed, obfuscated and got themselves wound up in endless bureaucracy with this money, they should be returning it, with interest, from the end of the fiscal year last year.

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean–Carleton):** Hear, hear. And an apology.

**Mr. Tory:** And an apology. My friend from Nepean–Carleton is absolutely right: There should be an apology.

But the fact is, people will say, "Well, you know, it really doesn't matter that much. It would have only been, say, \$100 per family." Well, at this stage both the tangible help of \$100 a family and just the smallest recognition that that would have provided, had they put it

in the throne speech, that Ontario's families are suffering, would have made a difference. For example, it would have paid for just a small portion of the double health tax whammy that people are facing across this province, courtesy of this Premier and this Liberal government, who hold on to their money and sit and hoard it in a bank account when people need that money across this province, and they need it today.

How about property assessments? Seniors and families, people who have often owned the same home, the same farm, for many, many years are getting notices in the mail now, and they're seeing their assessments go up 40%, 50% and 60%. It's unpredictable and it's arbitrary and it's unfair. The Premier of the province says he won't deal with it because, and I quote, "He didn't run on it." Well, I ask the Premier of this province—and he's not here, but through you, Mr. Speaker—did he run on a health tax? Did he run on consciously ignoring each and every year his own commitment to balance the budget? Did he run on delisting chiropractic services, physiotherapy and eye examinations? Did he run on any of these things?

**Interjections:** No.

**Mr. Tory:** He didn't run on any of these things.

He can find some time. He could find some time right now, and he could have found a couple of lines in the throne speech to say that he was going to take the opportunity to review the impact that this is all having on people, especially those with fixed incomes, with catastrophic assessment increases.

How about the whole business of who does what between the municipal and provincial governments? That might have helped people struggling to pay huge increases that are taking place in their property taxes. AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, in commenting on the throne speech said that there is no hope as a result of this throne speech of "fiscally sustainable municipal government."

We hear this government repeat over and over and over again, one minister, one member after another, that this is a problem they inherited from the previous government. We heard it today with respect to garbage. You know what? I say this, and the people of Ontario are on to this: This government has now been in office for more than two years. They have had every opportunity, including most recently their own throne speech brought in to this House last week, to say whatever they wanted on any issue they wanted. They could have set out some plan they had to get people to formulate their own plans on garbage. They could have said something meaningful on crime—I'll come back to that—and they could have said, "It's time to review the allocation of responsibilities between the provincial and the municipal governments to make sure that we have it right."

Whatever was said about revenue neutrality and whatever revenue-neutral intentions may have existed at the time that responsibilities were reallocated, they are far from a reality today. I've said this many times. We would give Ontarians the facts of what had happened in



the 10 years since those responsibilities were reallocated and then act on those facts. And at the very least as well, if that had been contained in this throne speech, it would have provided a glimmer of hope to property taxpayers, because that's part of what's causing them to have trouble coping.

1610

Why don't we talk about the health tax for a minute? You remember what a prominent part that played in the platform of the Liberal Party at the time of the last election. It was right there, front and center: "We're going to impose the single, biggest tax increase in the history of Ontario, we're going to make sure it's as regressive as possible and we're really going to stick it to people."

This past spring, by the admission of the former Minister of Finance in his most recent statement, this Liberal government under Mr. McGuinty's leadership found, in essence, a billion dollars in the cushions of their various chesterfields. They were kind of searching about there, doing whatever they were doing, and found, in their collective couches, a billion dollars. You could otherwise say they found it in their pants pocket. They just found this money.

I remember watching with great hilarity the Minister of Finance saying they found this extra money—that windfall—that frankly came from, and should have been the subject of a big thank you to, hard-working people and hard-working companies across Ontario. That's where the money came from. I remember watching with hilarity the former Minister of Finance saying it came as a result of his good management. Well, I call it good luck, or I call it good work by Ontario taxpayers, but most certainly not good management on the part of this government. They wouldn't know good management if they fell over it. It does not take an accounting degree to link the government's extra revenues with their record health tax. That's where the money came from—a billion dollars extra.

If, as a result of that windfall, that good fortune, they had said, "We're going to take the opportunity, because we have a billion dollars extra that we didn't expect, that we found in the cushions of the couch, that we found it in our pants pocket"—even if they wanted to say "by good management," I wouldn't have cared if they had followed that up by saying, "We're going to balance the books a little faster than the schedule we laid out." Of course, even the schedule they've laid out today is way outside of what they said they would do when they were campaigning for public office in 2003.

If they had said that they were going to apply that extra billion dollars toward making sure the debt didn't grow and debt interest charges didn't rise, we might have said, "Do you know what? That's not so bad." Had they offered to return some of this money to the Ontario families who earned it and whom they hit with this new tax, we might have agreed with that. Had they kept their own election commitments—again, go back to their platform document, which said, "We will live by the

balanced-budget law." And they also said, "We will make sure the debt goes in one direction only: down." If they had done that—taken some of that money and either applied it to reducing the deficit a bit faster than their schedule or given some of it back to Ontario taxpayers—they certainly would have been shielded from criticism.

That is why, when they said the direction of the debt would only be down, that they would abide by the balanced-budget law and didn't, the word of this Premier and this government mean nothing. There is promise after promise, commitment after commitment like that made in their own platform, in previous throne speeches and so on that have been completely dishonoured by this government, because they, as well as everybody else, have obviously decided that their word really doesn't mean anything. To me, it is also pretty fundamental to the care and attention Ontario needs, in order to stay prosperous and strong, to have a government whose leadership understands and thinks every day that his word and their word does mean something. It means everything in terms of the kind of credibility he has when he goes, on our behalf, to meetings around this country or within this province, or sits down with anybody in talks about anything.

You know, they sat around and decided how to cut up the cash when it came to the extra billion dollars they found. Yet, as they sat and did that—I understand they had caucus meetings over the course of the summer, and they were told, long before the rest of us knew, that they were going to have a one-time-only \$1-billion windfall: "What do you want to do with it? How do you want to spend it? It's the only chance you're going to get." They sat at their retreats and had discussions about how to spend this money, how to cut up the cash, as it were, like it was a lottery winning they were going to just take on behalf of the taxpayers of Ontario and blow for political purposes.

In the meantime, the debt, which they said would only go one direction, down, rises and the debt interest charges rise to the point where by 2007—and we'll be reminding the people of this when we get to the election campaign—the debt interest charges being paid by those very same hard-working families in this province will be equal to the entire budget of the Ministry of Education. Let me pause for a moment and repeat that to the hard-working people watching at home: By 2007, thanks to the profligacy and irresponsibility of this government, which is adding every hour of every day to the debt of this government, they are going to make sure the debt interest charges are equal to the entire amount we spend on the Ministry of Education—

**Mr. Baird:** Shame.

**Mr. Tory:** —and that, as the member for Nepean—Carleton says, is shameful.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tory:** My friend from across the way seems to be having trouble containing himself. We'll come back to him later, because his tenure as Minister of Agriculture was nothing short of shameful in terms of the inattention to the—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Labour will come to order.

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** We have an extra billion dollars found in the cushions of the chesterfield and nothing but additional spending on political boondoggles of one kind or another to show for it: nothing done for the deficit, not a penny given back to the taxpayers, not even the tiniest gesture of recognition given to the people of Ontario that this McGuinty Liberal government understands they are struggling and having trouble coping. They just had the meetings to cut up the cash.

Do you know what it comes down to? It comes down to a complete lack of respect for the people who earned that money: hard-working businesses and farmers and taxpayers. It comes down to a lack of respect for whose money it is. It is not the money of the Liberal caucus to cut up, like some kind of winning lottery ticket, and spend on political boondoggles. It comes down, at the end of the day, to no respect for the fact that too many taxpayers are having trouble making ends meet. They don't recognize it, they don't respect it, they don't do anything about it, and that is why their throne speech said not a word that will provide any help to those people who are struggling today.

That's why we reject that throne speech and why we'll be moving an amendment at the end of these remarks to say that we reject it, because what it is is the same old tax-and-spend approach, the same old tax-and-spend approach. It's all they know how to do. The taxpayers, to them, are not people to be respected; they're not people to whom to be accountable. They are just an ATM: Any time you run out of money, don't even bother sticking in the card; just stick it to them and get more money to finance your political boondoggles.

Outside of this House, there is a real world with real people facing real problems looking for real help and real results. I regret to inform you, Mr. Speaker, that this throne speech had nothing for them.

It is key that to build more prosperity, to create and maintain jobs for the children and grandchildren of those here and of everybody in Ontario, to pay for world-class health and education and provide real support for people in need, we need to have a strong economy. A strong economy is a function of many things but includes, in particular, the overall investment climate. Building a strong economy requires disciplined management of government finances, not this kind of boondoggling, spend-it-all, "the more you can find to spend, the more you should spend" approach taken by the Liberals, because people out there understand. They understand it from their personal lives. We understand that today's deficit and debt are tomorrow's taxes. Today's deficit and debt are tomorrow's taxes.

A strong economy requires a smart regulatory environment.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tory:** We're on to you now. We're on to your new portfolio. I hate to say it: God knows what you can

do in this one. But you know, just speaking about the regulatory environment that will encourage investment, your predecessor over there brought in a piece of labour legislation that was, if ever there was one, a solution in search of a problem. You took a secret ballot, the most democratic and open thing—open in the sense that everybody knows what the rules are; they all know how it works. We all know; it's what we use for elections. You took that and decided you had a better idea. It was working. There were no complaints about it. There were no complaints, but no, no, no, you and your predecessors and all of you over there had a much better idea of a solution in search of a problem.

Environmental laws, which are not firm and balanced at one and the same time—they have already succeeded in chasing jobs out of this province from the Sarnia-Lambton area, where they said directly that jobs left this province on account of the reverse onus you put on the people, contrary to all the values we believe in in the justice and regulatory system in this province.

**1620**

Building a competitive economic climate is more important than ever. It requires that we keep our regulations competitive, it requires that we keep the business climate competitive and it requires that we keep our taxes competitive, and a lot more things beyond that. A competitive climate for investment requires certainty, it requires predictability, and it requires stability. None of this is achieved by making up policy on the fly. None of this is achieved by punishing working families with \$2,000 a year more each in additional taxes when this Premier, Mr. McGuinty, ran on the platform of not increasing taxes. Instead, not only does he not keep his word; he punishes Ontario families to the extent of \$2,000 each. What kind of predictability, what kind of stability, what kind of certainty, what kind of integrity is that? None of this kind of certainty or predictability or stability is achieved by punishing businesses, big and small, with billions of dollars in payroll tax increases, the most recent of which is the WSIB premium increase imposed on the businesses of Ontario.

Why should anybody in Ontario, when it comes to this throne speech, believe anything that this Premier has written on those pages read by the Lieutenant Governor when their record is clear? Their record is clear on every account—every account.

I didn't get time to ask today about a public inquiry into legionnaires' disease. This is the government that asked for, I think the number is, 153 public inquiries when they were in opposition; Mr. McGuinty himself asked for 29. He said that the very reason they needed to have them was because only with a public inquiry do you get the kind of transparency and openness where you can get answers for people who have fallen victim to terrible things that happen in our society. Many of the 29 public inquiries Mr. McGuinty asked for during his tenure as Leader of the Opposition didn't involve any loss of life whatsoever. In this case, we have 17 elderly people who died in one week. This is another example: Say one thing



when are you in opposition—29 times a public inquiry is needed—but do another when you get into government.

The Premier half-heartedly apologizes for breaking his word, not once, not twice—50 times, actually—but he apologized with respect to the biggest one; namely, his promise not to increase taxes. Yet you really know you've got a problem with somebody when they half-heartedly apologize and grudgingly force out of themselves an admission that this was wrong, that he broke his word.

But you know what? He's still at it. In the face of tough economic times, weeks ago they brought in huge increases in taxes—because what are these payments that are made to the WSIB, these payroll taxes and so on? They're just taxes. You can call them all kinds of names. Call them whatever you want, but the bottom line is, he's still at it. In tough economic times, no consideration of any relief whatsoever for hardworking families; no consideration of just leaving business people alone when they need to have a competitive tax regime, when they need to have a reasonable kind of regulatory climate; no consideration whatsoever, for example, to phasing out a little faster when they found the billion dollars in the chesterfield cushions. Why wouldn't they have said, "Maybe a little bit of that could go to phase out the capital tax a bit faster"? Because there's a tax—not a lot of people understand it; it's easy to villainize the people who pay it and say they should be paying more. This government has followed on the policy of the previous government and said that the capital tax should be phased out over a period of time. So if you have a billion dollars that you found, why wouldn't you take just a little bit of it and maybe say, "Fine, we'll speed that up because that's going to help bring about new investment in the province of Ontario"?

Unfortunately, the results of this growing competitive gap are becoming very clear. First of all, over the course of this year—just so far this year—Ontario has lost 43,000 manufacturing jobs, 43,000 manufacturing jobs lost so far. Secondly, for five months this year and for the first time since the end of World War II, Ontario's unemployment rate actually exceeded the national average. That's the first time since the end of the Second World War that that has happened. These are disturbing numbers and disturbing trends, and yet what we have in the face of that is old Premier "Don't worry, be happy" himself saying, "Why do you people trouble yourself with these things? Why do you trouble yourself with the fact that the border may be closed any day to the garbage and we're not working on a plan; we're just assuming somebody else is doing it? Why do you trouble yourself with the summer of crime that has taken place, not just in Toronto, but principally here and in other communities across the province? We had a couple of press conferences; what more do you expect? Why do you trouble yourself with the fact that 43,000 jobs have been lost in this province—manufacturing jobs? Why do you trouble yourself with the fact that the unemployment rate is above the national average several months in a row for the first time since World War II?"

These are disturbing numbers. Ontario has traditionally been the economic engine of the entire country. I started off by saying today that I believe we have an economic engine here that is the rival of any other that will ever exist in Canada, and well we should keep it that way. Well we should keep it that way that we have an economic engine that does it our way with manufacturing and resources and farming and the service economy and the financial services industry, and on and on it goes. We have the biggest population base in the country. We have one of the world's most diversified and highly skilled workforces, and yet there is evidence coming up, time after time, that we're starting to fall behind.

I don't blame the Premier for all of the challenges that we face as a province. Certainly he doesn't set the value of the Canadian dollar. But I do lay at his doorstep, and I lay at the doorstep of the Liberal Party under Mr. McGuinty's leadership, the fact that he developed and personally initiated the taxes that he stuck Ontario taxpayers and businesses with, as well as the new regulations and the new labour laws and the complete and total insensitivity to the struggles of small businesses, entrepreneurs, individuals, farmers and others right across this province.

I would argue that this throne speech was the latest sad chapter in this Liberal government's sad record of more taxes, more regulations, more laws, none of which do anything to help foster that investment climate that we need so much to cause people to take risks, to invest in Ontario, to create jobs here and to produce the kinds of revenues that we need in order to finance the things that we cherish so much: health care, education and other help for people. There is no help for real people or real businesses with real problems. There is no help for families who need real help and still have not received any from this Premier and from this Liberal Party. Meaningful commitments on the economy—go back and read through it—were largely absent from this government's throne speech. The last thing we needed to hear was a commitment to establish a new layer of bureaucracy—not just one; quite a few of them—and yet this new research and innovation council is their answer to economic development and improving the investment climate and encouraging people to create and maintain jobs in Ontario.

I've travelled to 101—I've never thought of this, but maybe in the two ridings I've missed, that's where all the people are who are saying, "You know what we need? You know what we need to help us create jobs in Ontario, to help us cope with all the ever-increasing taxes this government has put on us, to help us cope with the struggles of looking after our families? We need a research and innovation council." It could be in those two ridings. I'm going to have to get myself to those two ridings away, but I doubt that's what I'm going to find when I get there.

The throne speech also included the often repeated, especially under this government, over and over again—we've heard them, in two years, promise 20 times to

speed up regulatory approvals for foreign-trained professionals. You might remember the promise, Mr. Speaker, because it was in the platform and it was in the last speech from the throne, two years ago. They're hoping we all forget, especially the hard-working people who have come to this country with a skill set. They're hoping that those people forget they promised to do something about this two years ago and they failed to keep their promises then. I have no idea why any of these people anywhere in Ontario who came from anywhere in the world with any skill would believe a word of what is in this document that we saw last week.

Entire sectors of our economy were left right out of this throne speech: agriculture, forestry, manufacturing.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** They were not.

**Mr. Tory:** My friend across says, "They were not." It was the most appalling claptrap put in about these things. It was statements of good intention and claimed credit for things not done; it was unbelievable. Again, go out and ask a farmer, "What was in that throne speech for you?" Survey any number of farmers you want and say, "Were you really happy about all the stuff you got in the throne speech?" Ask anyone. Ask any of them.

There are some long-term investments contemplated in the throne speech, but if you're looking for real help for the real problems of today, don't look in this document because you won't find it. Creating and maintaining jobs is the most important economic priority of any government. That's because the people we represent—our kids, their kids, their grandchildren—need those jobs. They need those jobs because we all want to work and make a productive contribution. But it's also because more jobs means more money for the government. A simple 1% growth in this province's GDP would translate into \$615 million in additional revenue in the year that it occurred, and ultimately, if it was carried on, year after year, would result in billions more in revenue for the government; 1% increase in the growth carried on and sustained over a period of time. Think of the difference that would make in terms of our ability to do some of the things we've talked about today.

1630

Conversely, the more than 40,000 manufacturing jobs that have disappeared on this government's watch this year, those 43,000 jobs alone have cost the treasury or will cost the treasury upwards of \$103 million in taxes that won't be paid because those people are not working. That's based on average wages in average manufacturing jobs times the 43,000 people who aren't working in those manufacturing jobs today. That includes as well the fact that those people won't be paying the Premier's famous or infamous health tax because they're not going to be working.

Moving on—

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** How are you going to pay for those new drugs?

**Mr. Tory:** How am I going to pay for those drugs? Good question. I will say to you, through you, Mr. Speaker, that if you had just the smallest iota of attention to creating more jobs and creating that extra 1% of economic growth in this province, that would pay for all of those drugs and more. Instead, what you do is you do anything—\$615 million. Just leave the people in place who were working in those 43,000 jobs, including manufacturing jobs in your constituency, and those people would be paying the money to this government to pay for the drugs you talked about.

You are totally asleep at the switch over there when it comes to the economy of this province. Jobs are not coming here, jobs are not staying here, and that is your responsibility and it is at your doorstep.

I don't know how you have the temerity—never mind. It's not even worth it. It is just so sad, it's not even worth it.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** It's time to remind everyone that only one member has the floor at a time and that in respect for that member, we will yield the floor to him. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** Since the government House leader and Minister of Tourism talked about health care, let's move on to talk about that for a minute. I will begin with this fundamental truth about the file. It's a hard file; it's probably the hardest file in all of government. Building a world-class health system, however, requires you to be bold. There are a lot of entrenched interests in the health care debate and a lot of political pressure not to act at all, just to sort of leave things as they are and keep shovelling more money into it and hope for the best. So we all sit and watch money wasted, money that could go to better patient care, but it's not because we focus on how much we're spending as opposed to how well we're spending it and what we're getting for the money that we're spending. Judging by the text of the throne speech, the McGuinty Liberals have not learned about this. They feel the ultimate test really just is, how much do you spend, how much do you do, as opposed to what kind of outcomes you are getting.

The major commitment in health care in this throne speech is to establish—guess what? It's something I've heard about every stop I've made across the province: "We need more bureaucrats at the Ministry of Health. We think the establishment of this Soviet-style central command and control is really going to be the answer to help us get better value for the health care money." People have been coming up to me—I'm thinking of asking for security because there are so many people who come up to me and say, "Why won't you get up and support the establishment of those levels of bureaucracy that the McGuinty Liberals are trying so hard to establish in this province?" It's unbelievable. Well, I tell you what: There isn't one of them who thinks they need that bureaucracy. There isn't one who has come up and said they need it. There is a lot who say they don't need it. And that's all these people are doing with respect to trying to bring about better health care.



What they need is not more bureaucrats. They don't need more bureaucrats. They need more nurses, more doctors and more health professionals on the front lines and at the bedside. What do we see? We see them firing 1,000 nurses—how much was it?—\$91 million allocated last year to fire the nurses, and yet the Minister of Health gets up and says regularly, “Oh, no. No nurses have been fired in this province.” He uses some clever words that say, “There have been none that have been paid severance” or something. The fact is they are out there, 1,200 other health professionals are out there. They have lost their jobs.

Ontarians have plenty of reason to be very suspicious, indeed, of the numbers of this Liberal government. Even the 3,000 nurses they just love to brag that they've hired, by the way, halfway through their term—better than halfway now and the target is 8,000. They are at 3,000, so heaven knows how we're going to get to the 8,000, but they're not even really at the 3,000. The fact is the people who have been hired—if they total 3,000 at all, which I doubt; these guys would round it up from 1,500 to 3,000 if they were given the choice—have been hired on short-term contract positions, not full-time, without job security, and in fact hospitals continue to lay off nurses to this day.

We could also look at wait times, which are a silent burden for every family living with a loved one requiring care. I'm delighted that the government shares the opposition's concern about health care wait times, but pay attention to what was actually said in the throne speech.

What was actually said? The speech praised the government. Some of those lavish pages of praise they forced the poor Lieutenant Governor to read lavished praise on this government for increasing the number of medical procedures that were taking place in Ontario.

Not once was there mentioned during the course of the speech where the wait times were today, where we wanted to get them to, or what the result of all these increased procedures was going to be in terms of what wait times are and what they should be; not once how much they should improve or what the target should be.

The speech did promise “unprecedented transparency” for wait time information, which, considering the Liberal government's record of absolute and total obstruction to date when it comes to making information available and the so-called transparency Mr. McGuinty called for when he became Premier, is not exactly going to be a hard promise for them to keep.

I stood the first day or second day I was here in this House and I asked the Premier a very straightforward question to which he should have had the answer, and that question was about lowering wait times. I said, “Well, if you are going to lower them, that's fine. We all support that. Where are you starting? What are the wait times the day you are starting to lower them, so that we can all measure how you're doing?” Do you know what? Both the minister and the Premier refused to answer that question. They refused to answer that question.

**Mr. Baird:** They didn't know; they couldn't.

**Mr. Tory:** I'm not sure. My friend from Nepean—Carleton says they didn't know. I'm not sure about that. I don't know whether they didn't know or if it just didn't suit them to answer the question.

The government promotes a new Web site coming in the next few days, and yet they don't highlight that they will shut down the old one that was very competently and objectively run by the orthopaedic doctors. It was a Web site that had existed for years. It had a modest amount of government funding. They ran it objectively, properly and competently, and we could see exactly how long people had to wait for those procedures. Why would they shut down the Web site that was objectively and properly and competently run by the orthopaedic surgeons and replace it with their own?

Well, you know why they are closing it down: because it was objective. It was actually run by somebody else, not the propaganda artists in the Premier's office who are going to run this new one. Objective measurements can't be altered. Objective people won't alter measurements. Those measurements cannot be manipulated for political gain, which is exactly what you are going to see, I guarantee it, with this new Web site. I guarantee that with this new Web site you're going to see political manipulation of the wait time data.

If this were a Progressive Conservative throne speech, we would have started with the real information, not an ever-changing yardstick designed to confuse. I would spend the time to have a real dialogue with people about the waste they see in the health care system.

When I was at the cardiology unit at Sunnybrook recently having a tour, they talked to me about some of the absolutely incredible un-businesslike decisions that are made in the health care system as a result of the policies of this government, policies that, frankly, in some cases have been in place for a long time.

In the emergency department at Sick Kids, front-line people and nurses said to me that there are decisions being made every day that result in far from the best use of the taxpayers' money when we are short of money. Front-line people see waste and duplication and dumb decisions. They see it. They know that what remains to be done in health care in terms of finding greater efficiencies isn't about communications advisers and bureaucrats. They know that it's time to have a real dialogue with them, an open dialogue, a real dialogue with the taxpayers of Ontario, to talk about the health care system, to talk about what they—meaning the front-line workers or the taxpayers—see and experience and how it could be made better.

For all the research and professional lobbying being done and all the focus groups you are having and all the other stuff, why don't we ask the front-line workers for the suggestions they have on how the health care system could be run better? And ask the people of Ontario, in an open discussion—an open discussion where you don't tell them what they can or can't say or what ideas they do or don't have.

If there were such an open discussion, I would ask about the possible role of risk-takers and innovators and idea people and their money in the current health care system, because we need them and their ideas at work, investing and innovating within a universal, single-payer system. Within a universal, single-payer system, we need the innovation and the ideas and the efficiencies and the investment of those people, without them being vilified, without even any discussion about what they might do to make our universal single-payer system better. We can still protect the principles of universality, but let's not be afraid to investigate improvements in efficiency, in innovation and in responsive service as well.

1640

For every Ontarian struggling on a wait list, for every family with a loved one in long-term care, for every patient now having to dig into their own pockets as a result of the policies of the McGuinty Liberals for eye care, physio or chiropractic services, the rainy day is now. Health care is just too important to reduce to empty jargon and meaningless declarations of victory. Until people start seeing improvements at the front line and at the bedside, it's too early to label it anything more than a work in progress. What this government wants to do is say, "Look. We've taken in all this money. It's a great thing. We've fixed health care." I can tell you from my travels around the province—and we had another example of that with the people who were here today. But you could bring people here every day, and if you asked them the question, as I do when I'm out there, as you could do if they were here, "Do you believe the health care in your community has improved on the watch of this government?" and, given the fact that you are paying billions more in your own taxes and that we're receiving as a province hundreds of millions of dollars more from the federal government, the answer would be an overwhelming no because the fact is, they can't find a doctor, they can't get into overcrowded emergency rooms, they can't get a bed, they're still waiting for operations and, for every wait list that you might bring down—although we don't know how we'd ever measure it with this bunch—there's going to be a new waiting list created somewhere else for some other procedure that people are going to have to have.

In a similar fashion, our province's system of education has a long way to go. I realize that the Premier sees himself as the self-declared champion of innovation and education. Whatever our political differences may be, I recognize from my dealings with him that I think his belief in the importance of education is quite sincere. But the fact is, good intentions don't equal good policy.

The Premier has, for some time now—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** You raised tuition.

**Mr. Tory:** I raised tuition? You are the biggest non-answerers in the history—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** No, no, no. You raised tuition.

**Mr. Tory:** And you're about to. Why doesn't the member for St. Catharines stand up right now and say they'll freeze tuition for another—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Fifty per cent, you raised tuition.

**The Speaker:** The government House Leader knows better. If the Leader of the Opposition would continue his speech unfettered—through the Speaker, please.

**Mr. Tory:** The member for St. Catharines is just not able to contain himself. It's unbelievable. The longer he's been here, the more irascible and so on he gets. It's unbelievable.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tory:** Mr. Bradley knows that I say that tongue-in-cheek because he behaved exactly the same way when I worked for Premier Davis 23 years ago. It hasn't improved, but nor has it got significantly worse, and I would say that's a cause for a major victory.

The Premier has, for some time now, promised to cap class sizes for our youngest children. However, nothing is being done. Last year, only 36% of Ontario primary classes had actually made the hard cap of 20 students. We saw the spectacle of the minister coming forward. When you look in the platform, there was no asterisk there saying, "If we can," or "Maybe there'll be a few people left out," or "Maybe there'll be places where it won't happen"; it just said that it would be done, period, full stop, for every class in the early elementary grades.

Yet what we find is that here we are better than halfway through the term and 36% have measured up to the hard cap, with all kinds of excuses on how many people never will, and they haven't even bothered to bring forward the amendments to the Education Act that are required in order to make sure that that cap becomes something that is part of the law of this province. So this is, too, just like all the rest of it, becoming another rapidly breaking, if not broken, Liberal promise to be added to the heap of broken promises that came before.

A sensible person would think that the government would do everything it can to help our students succeed. Yet the Minister of Education made the remarkable announcement that this government would respond to disappointing test scores by making the tests easier, by dumbing down, as they say. They are telling our students that the best way to respond to the challenge is not to work harder but to lower the bar. That is not the right message to send to our students. Perhaps there are some changes that are needed in order to fine-tune what has been done, but dumbing down and taking the whole thing down quite a few notches is not going to send the right message to the students of Ontario, it's not going to send the right message to the educators of Ontario, it's not going to send the right message to the parents of Ontario and, I would argue, it's not going to send the right message about Ontario to the rest of the world in terms of the standards we set in this province.

How's the time clock? Six minutes? My goodness gracious, I have far more to say than that.

So it's not the way to prepare them for a competitive world.

On post-secondary education, I said that I thought what was being done to increase that investment was right in principle and that we would wait to see the fine



print, to see the funds flow and to see what was actually done with the money before being too enthusiastic in our commendation.

I take it from Bonnie Patterson of Trent University, who said, "We're well into our fiscal year and we still haven't seen the flow of resources." That's what she had to say after the throne speech.

Again, there are real people and real students and universities looking for the results they were promised but still can't see. The throne speech, quite frankly, six months or so after these commitments to post-secondary education were made, two years after the commitments in the earlier grades were made, should have spelled out the details, should have put the hard caps and the hard details in place and got the law changed.

That brings me to energy. Talk about a made-in-Ontario crisis in energy. It is the habit of this government, and we see it happening day after day, to announce and reannounce and then reannounce again, and not surprisingly they have to go back quite often on their commitments in order to push back a project's deadline. That, of course, just gives them another excuse for another reannouncement later on.

I will only say this: that how this government could proceed to announce—and then, of course, they've broken that promise too in terms of their deadline on the coal plants—the coal decision, announced back in 2003 as well, without having, then or now, any plan whatsoever on where the power is going to come from to replace the 20% to 25% of our electricity that came from those plants, I will never understand. It's just irresponsible. It's not businesslike; it's not sensible. It's irresponsible and it is evidence, I think, of an overall attitude on these things, to say, "Well, you know, political ideology is actually far more important than examining things on a businesslike basis, doing the hard work, doing the homework, considering the options."

This government, instance after instance—LCBO, nuclear energy—announced their findings before they even received the reports that they go out and commission among people who are great experts—with the exception, of course, of forestry. They commissioned one of the best panels of experts they could find from around the province and then promptly rejected most of what those people—from unions, from municipalities, from companies and from all over the place—said.

We should have had a throne speech that left ideology at the door, that committed to a businesslike approach, that would commit to a full and public review of our energy needs instead of what we see happening now, which is reports that are accepted when it suits them and not accepted when it doesn't suit them. Decisions are made before the reports are received. The whole thing absolutely defies description. Anybody who disagrees, of course, with any aspect of their policy is a Neanderthal. Whoever they are—Energy Probe, mayors, forestry workers—they're all Neanderthals. It's only these people who have all the answers and know how to do it.

I talked about agriculture—nothing for the farmers in this throne speech. The same ad campaign they an-

nounced up at the plowing match—basically, to announce the annual ad campaign, you have to do Foodland Ontario—is an insult to the farmers of this province. The campaign has gone on every year for decades, and to say that is the answer to people who can't put the crops in the ground next spring, can't meet the payments the banks are asking for, is just unbelievable. That was your last hurrah before you left. I'm sure you drafted that one up: "We'll send them an ad campaign and really make them happy out there in rural Ontario." But it doesn't answer the \$170 million that has been cut from the budget and the spending of the minister of—

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** That's a lie.

**Mr. Tory:** I know; tell me it's rubbish. I know; go ahead.

**The Speaker:** The Minister of Labour will withdraw.

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** I withdraw that comment.

Talk about the \$125 million you cut—

**The Speaker:** Minister of Labour. Minister.

The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** The Premier says he cares about farmers, but actions speak louder than words. At least the Premier should be straight with the farmers and indicate once and for all if he does see a viable future for them, because everything he has done indicates that it's just not something that makes his radar screen at all.

Forestry: no plan at all to stem the loss of jobs in the north; absolutely nothing. A report from the best panel of experts the minister could find—and then you take little bits and pieces of it and announce this program that the industry says just isn't going to work at all.

Public safety: They've announced probably eight times they are going to have 1,000 officers, and, as I pointed out to the Premier today in question period—not one. There are not 1,000 new officers; not 100; not one new police officer in any community in this province in furtherance of that promise; two years plus into the mandate, there's not one to show for it. This is a government that's much more focused—think of all they had to say on pit bulls last summer, all the time and airwaves that were taken up with that, and yet on police officers and more help for communities and kids and families to help fight crime, we have nothing.

1650

Gridlock: We have urban Ontario families—and I know it's one and a half minutes. I think you'll give me the latitude perhaps to speak until 5 o'clock, Mr. Speaker, and then I will be finished. We have urban Ontario families struggling under a system that just doesn't work. Traffic gridlock hurts the economy; it keeps commuters away from their family. We have from the platform that the Liberals will create the Greater Toronto Transit Authority that "will be given the clout and resources to tackle gridlock." Here we are two years later: no transit authority. They are promising it again in this throne speech. Meanwhile, people are spending hours of their time going to work.

Garbage: It was a pathetic spectacle we saw here today with the bravado of somebody getting up and

saying, "Well, we've done more in eight months than you did in 12 years," and so on. They have done absolutely nothing, and there's been no insistence on anyone having a plan to deal with this or on even setting out how they are going to achieve their own goals of recycling and diversion, again, as contained in their election platform.

Do you know what the best announcement was in the entire throne speech? It was the creation of the Bob Hunter Memorial Park. That, I'm happy to support. That was pretty good. But that said, when you get to the point where the most substantive thing you can point to in a speech from the throne is the creation and naming of a park after a great activist and a couple of "novelty" items, to quote the Premier, that are thrown in there for good measure, I have to tell you, that really is just too much.

Speaking of novelty items, there's the money-back guarantee on birth certificates. I'll tell you the money that people want back: They expect the government of Ontario to produce birth certificates in a timely fashion and get themselves organized to do it. The money they want back is some of the health tax. They want some of that money back. That is what they want.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** And the energy.

**Mr. Tory:** They want their own energy money back that, as is suggested, they are still hoarding in their bank accounts.

You know what else? When somebody went last week to see if you could actually get one of these birth certificates on-line, the whole Web site was down, and they didn't tell anybody in the fine print that you have to be eight years of age or younger in order to get the guaranteed birth certificate. So it's just all part of the same malarkey.

On democratic reform, the back bench continues to be muzzled. Ministers of the crown persist in leading the charge in interventions in this House despite the Premier's commitment to the contrary. Freedom-of-information requests continue to be obstructed and delayed. I can tell you right now, we're going to continue to challenge this lack of accountability, this lack of transparency.

The first Liberal throne speech committed to not raising taxes; that was ignored. The first Liberal throne speech vilified private-public partnerships for new hospitals; now the Liberals embrace those with both arms. The first Liberal throne speech promised to provide a stable, reliable electricity supply, a supply that is more in jeopardy now than ever. The first Liberal throne speech promised answers to youth violence and traffic gridlock, and yet the only voice representing Ontarians, speaking up for Ontarians on those two issues, among others, is the Progressive Conservative caucus.

While there is a lot I disagree with in this throne speech, bad intentions are not the tragic flaw of this government. The flaw of the government—the main flaw, the most important flaw—lies in its lack of vision, its unwillingness to take tough decisions, notwithstanding their claim to the contrary, its incredible record of broken

promises, the fact that its word and its leader's word now mean nothing, and the fact that it refuses to be accountable to the people of Ontario for its decisions.

At the end of the day, a throne speech is nothing more than words printed on paper and read by a distinguished Ontarian. Unless it is backed up by action, by real commitment, by a sense of integrity, by a sense that the words mean something and that the word of the leader of the government means something, it might as well never be printed or read at all.

The Liberals' first throne speech was a lost opportunity. Their first two years in government under Mr. McGuinty's leadership have been a lost opportunity. The Liberals say they've changed. I say, prove it to the people of Ontario. They say they have a plan. I say, show us the plan on all these subjects we've talked about today. They say they are the party best prepared to face the difficult choices of tomorrow. We hear that a lot of people across the province disagree with that.

These days, the media's focus is on issues of government scandal, and I recognize that such scandals will be the focus of the Premier's attention for some time now. But the real scandal, I would argue, did not emerge last week. It is the scandal of two years of broken promises; two years of seeing our leadership have their word mean nothing and not care about it; two years of doing things quite differently from what you said you would do; two years of irresponsible management; two years of ignoring the plight of hard-working Ontarians who are having trouble coping out there, and who hope that, maybe just once, this McGuinty Liberal government might find themselves in the corner of the people. That's what the real scandal is.

This speech did not speak to real people who are out there hurting, with real problems, and who need real help right now. It did nothing to address their challenges. In fact, the challenges of those people—those average, hard-working people who are working harder and falling further behind—didn't even make the radar screen of this government. There wasn't one acknowledgment, one mention, one issue or one initiative that found its way into this throne speech for those people right now.

Well, Mr. McGuinty and the Liberals may be silent on this subject, they may be silent and their throne speech may be silent, but the Progressive Conservative Party, the official opposition, will not be silent on these subjects. Over the coming sitting of Parliament, we're going to make sure that the concerns of those Ontarians who are hurting the most get represented in this House. We are not going to let the government ignore them or forget them. We will fight for fairness and balance and ensure that people have a voice, because the kind of government we've been getting—the kind of leadership, the kind of abdication of any sense of having one's word mean something, the kind of "say one thing and do another"—is not good enough for the people of Ontario. This is not good enough for the kind of government people deserve in this province.

So to that end, I would like to move this amendment to the motion moved in reply to His Honour's address:



I move that the address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session be amended by striking out all the words after, "We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session," and replacing them with the following:

"However, the current speech from the throne ignores the real problems faced by real working families throughout Ontario; and

"Whereas, in place of real action for Ontario's families this throne speech offers nothing more than warmed-over old announcements and 'novelty items'; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardship imposed by the new Liberal health tax during an already difficult time; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardships that Ontarians face in paying more for electricity, home heating and vital medical care; and

"Whereas the throne speech continues to neglect the mounting problems of nursing supply, wait-lists or timely access to care; and

"Whereas, based on this Liberal government's broken promises in their first throne speech ... Ontarians have valid reason to doubt the contents of the current one.

"Therefore, I regret to inform His Honour that the current Liberal government has failed to keep its election commitments, failed to listen to the real needs of Ontario families and have instead persisted in unreasonable taxation, undisciplined spending and continued neglect of the real needs of Ontarians. We therefore condemn this government for ignoring the real problems facing real Ontario families and demand immediate action before it's too late."

**The Speaker:** Mr. Tory has moved the following amendment:

"I move that the address in reply to the"—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Dispense.

**The Speaker:** Dispense?

**Mr. Baird:** No.

**The Speaker:** "I move that the address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session be amended by striking out all the words after, 'We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour

for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session,' and replacing them with the following:

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"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardship imposed by the new Liberal health tax during an already difficult time; and

"Whereas the throne speech ignores the real hardships that Ontarians face in paying more for electricity, home heating and vital medical care; and

"Whereas the throne speech continues to neglect the mounting problems of nursing supply, wait-lists or timely access to care; and

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"Therefore, I regret to inform His Honour that the current Liberal government has failed to keep its election commitments, failed to listen to the real needs of Ontario families and have instead persisted in unreasonable taxation, undisciplined spending and continued neglect of the real needs of Ontarians. We therefore condemn this government for ignoring the real problems facing real Ontario families and demand immediate action before it's too late."

**Mr. Tory:** Mr. Speaker, I've completed my comments, but I just want to thank you for your indulgence in allowing me a few extra moments beyond the hour to say that I really do think the people of Ontario have the right to expect better. We're going to be continuing our work over the next session of Parliament to make sure we get that.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** The government moves adjournment of the House until 6:45 p.m. this evening.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1702.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Scott, Laurie (PC)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	<b>Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)</b> Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Beaches-East York / Beaches-York-Est	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est	Horwath, Andrea (ND)
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## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 17 octobre 2005

### PREMIÈRE LECTURE

<b>Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies publiques et des transports en commun (route commémorative Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment), projet de loi 5, <i>M. Parsons</i></b>	
Adoptée.....	46
<b>Loi Fred Glozer de 2005 modifiant la Loi sur la protection des locataires (services essentiels), projet de loi 6, <i>M<sup>me</sup> Horwath</i></b>	
Adoptée.....	46

### DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

<b>Semaine des bibliothèques publiques de l'Ontario</b>	
<i>M<sup>me</sup> Meilleur</i> .....	47
<i>M<sup>me</sup> Witmer</i> .....	50
<b>Promotion de la santé</b>	
<i>M. Watson</i> .....	48
<i>M<sup>me</sup> Witmer</i> .....	50

### PÉTITIONS

<b>Permis pour la vente de boissons alcooliques</b>	
<i>M. Lalonde</i> .....	62

# CONTENTS

Monday 17 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Veterans</b>	
Mr. O'Toole .....	43
<b>Thames Valley District School Board</b>	
Mr. Ramal .....	43
<b>Citizenship Week</b>	
Mr. Klees .....	43
<b>Riding of Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot</b>	
Mr. McMeekin .....	43
<b>West Lincoln Memorial Hospital</b>	
Mr. Hudak .....	44
<b>Poverty</b>	
Ms. Churley .....	44
<b>TTC safety</b>	
Mr. Berardinetti .....	44
<b>Schizophrenia</b>	
Mr. Kular .....	45
<b>George Hislop</b>	
Ms. Wynne .....	45

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Amendment Act (Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment Memorial Highway), 2005, Bill 5, Mr. Parsons</b>	
Agreed to .....	46
Mr. Parsons .....	46
<b>Fred Gloger Tenant Protection Amendment Act (Vital Services), 2005, Bill 6, Ms. Horwath</b>	
Agreed to .....	46
Ms. Horwath .....	46

## MOTIONS

<b>Committee membership</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	46
Agreed to .....	47
<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	47
Agreed to .....	47

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Ontario Public Library Week</b>	
Mrs. Meilleur .....	47
Mrs. Witmer .....	50
<b>Health promotion</b>	
Mr. Watson .....	48
Mrs. Witmer .....	50

<b>Electricity supply</b>	
Mrs. Cansfield .....	49
Mr. Yakabuski .....	50
Mr. Hampton .....	51

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Crime prevention</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	51
Mr. McGuinty .....	51
Mr. Hampton .....	57
Mr. Bryant .....	58
<b>Waste disposal</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	52
Mr. McGuinty .....	52
Mr. Wilkinson .....	53, 56
Ms. Churley .....	56
<b>Electricity supply</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	53
Mr. McGuinty .....	53
Mrs. Cansfield .....	54
<b>Cancer treatment</b>	
Mr. Jackson .....	55
Mr. Smitherman .....	55
<b>Renewable fuels</b>	
Mr. Brownell .....	56
Mrs. Dombrowsky .....	56
<b>Teacher misconduct</b>	
Mr. Klees .....	57
Mr. Kennedy .....	57
<b>Post-secondary education</b>	
Mr. Zimmer .....	58
Mr. Bentley .....	58
<b>Forest industry</b>	
Mr. Miller .....	59
Mr. McGuinty .....	59
<b>Gasoline prices</b>	
Mr. Bisson .....	59
Mr. Phillips .....	59
<b>Employment supports</b>	
Mr. McNeely .....	60
Ms. Pupatello .....	60

## PETITIONS

<b>Cancer treatment</b>	
Mr. Jackson .....	60
<b>Autism treatment</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	61
<b>Hospital funding</b>	
Mr. Flynn .....	61
Mr. Leal .....	62

<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Yakabuski .....	61
<b>Hospital services</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	61
<b>Queensway Carleton Hospital</b>	
Mr. Baird .....	62
Ms. Martel .....	63
<b>Optometrists</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	62
<b>Permis pour la vente de boissons alcooliques</b>	
Mr. Lalonde .....	62
<b>Highway 26</b>	
Mr. Wilson .....	63
<b>Gasoline prices</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	63
<b>Volunteer firefighters</b>	
Mr. Arnott .....	63

## GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

<b>Throne speech debate, government order number 1, Mr. Crozier</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	64
Debate adjourned .....	75

## OTHER BUSINESS

<b>Visitors</b>	
Mr. Leal .....	45
The Speaker .....	51
<b>Resignation of member for Scarborough-Rouge River</b>	
The Speaker .....	45
<b>Legislative pages</b>	
The Speaker .....	45
<b>Birth announcement</b>	
The Speaker .....	46

Continued overleaf





No. 4B

N° 4B

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 17 October 2005**

**Lundi 17 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers



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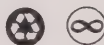
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Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 17 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 17 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PRIVATE SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES ACT, 2005 LOI DE 2005 SUR LES SERVICES PRIVÉS DE SÉCURITÉ ET D'ENQUÊTE

Mr. Kwinter moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 159, An Act to revise the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act and to make a consequential amendment to the Licence Appeal Tribunal Act, 1999 / *Projet de loi 159, Loi révisant la Loi sur les enquêteurs privés et les gardiens et apportant une modification corrélatrice à la Loi de 1999 sur le Tribunal d'appel en matière de permis.*

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I'll be sharing my time this evening with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Guelph-Wellington, Liz Sandals.

It's with great pleasure that I speak in support of the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2005. This bill marks the first significant improvement in 40 years to the legislative framework governing the private security industry in Ontario. As I indicated earlier in this House, this legislation is part of the government's plan to make Ontarians safer. The proposed act will increase the professionalism of the industry by standardizing training and making licensing mandatory for most security practitioners.

Many things have changed since the current Private Investigators and Security Guards Act was enacted in 1966. Our society has changed. The role and importance of the security industry in our daily lives have evolved, and the legislative framework governing the industry must change as well.

There were roughly 4,600 licensed security practitioners 40 years ago. There are now 31,000, and the number keeps growing. We must ensure that those protecting us are properly trained and licensed to do so. That means mandatory licensing, standardized training and new, more up-to-date standards for uniforms, vehicles and equipment.

The regulations that will be developed if the Legislature adopts Bill 159 would better reflect the growing

presence of security guards and private investigators in our society.

The proposed act results from a long series of events and consultations with our partners. First, a 2002 discussion paper from the Law Commission of Canada recommended the professionalization of the security industry. In 2003, a conference organized by the commission looked at the blurring of the role between public policing and the private security industry. Then there was a coroner's inquest held after the death of a Toronto man, following an altercation with grocery store employees and private security practitioners. The inquest resulted in 22 recommendations for the security industry, including those on mandatory licensing, training, licence classifications, portable licensing and an effective enforcement system. I'm pleased to say that the proposed legislation addresses most of the issues raised by the jury's recommendations.

Some of my colleagues in this House have played an important role as well. I'd like to thank Dave Levac, Mario Sergio and Garfield Dunlop in particular. Their respective private members' bills proposed many amendments to the existing act. Bill 159 is more comprehensive than the private members' bills introduced by my colleagues, particularly in the areas of licensing and training requirements. It does, however, include many provisions recommended in those private members' bills.

Other provinces are also moving ahead in modernizing their legislation on the private security industry: Quebec, BC, Manitoba and Nova Scotia, and just coincidentally, today I heard from the Solicitor General of Alberta asking if he can come to see me to talk about different stages of reviewing their legislation and introducing changes similar to Ontario's proposals. So there exists a clear momentum to update the way we legislate and regulate the private security industry.

#### 1850

We are moving ahead because we need to keep up with the times. The existing Private Investigators and Security Guards Act clearly lags behind the times. The current act lacks defined criteria on training, eligibility or competence, and its licensing criteria are mostly limited to criminal records checks. Almost half of those who provide security services are currently exempt from licensing, and these are requirements in the existing legislation.

It became obvious to almost all our stakeholders that we needed to update our legislation. We have worked with our stakeholders throughout the entire process. The ministry's discussion paper on the proposed changes to

the legislation was sent to more than 600 stakeholders and posted on the ministry Web site in June 2003. We received 73 written submissions and responses that assisted in the drafting of the legislation.

We have continued to work with our partners since the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2004, was introduced in December of last year. Earlier this year, we held briefings for our key stakeholders to outline the key aspects of the proposed legislation and to listen to their concerns and suggestions. Ministry officials met with representatives from the Association of Professional Security Agencies, the Canadian Society for Industrial Security, the Council of Private Investigators—Ontario, the Commissionaires Canada, and representatives from the retail and hospitality sectors. Officials from my ministry also met with key groups of the policing sector, partners from colleges, universities and municipalities, and with union representatives. The ministry has built strong relationships with its partners in the industry.

The goodwill generated by this positive partnership will help us develop strong and relevant regulations that will help us protect Ontarians. Our work with stakeholders will continue throughout the development of those regulations, and we have also invited key stakeholders to participate in the private security and investigative services advisory committee. The advisory committee's mandate is to provide feedback and advice from all sectors involved in the private security industry. The advisory committee is examining issues such as training and standards for uniforms, vehicles and equipment, and will assist in defining the act's accompanying regulations. The advisory committee is made up of representatives of the Association of Professional Security Agencies, the Council of Private Investigators, the Commissionaires Canada, the Canadian Society for Industrial Security, the Commercial Security Association of Canada, the Ontario Association of College and University Security Administrators, the Retail Council of Canada, the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association, the Ontario Association of Police Services Boards, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the Police Association of Ontario, the Ontario Provincial Police and the United Steelworkers of America. The advisory committee's members will continue to provide advice and guidance to the ministry with respect to new and emerging issues in the industry.

I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank them for their contributions. I'd also like to acknowledge the presence in the members' gallery of Marcel St. Jean, representing the Commercial Security Association.

I believe that we have achieved the right balance to reflect the concerns and issues of our partners. The advisory committee has provided key advice on the critical components of the proposed legislation: issues such as setting standards via regulations for training and testing, code of conduct, uniforms, equipment and vehicles. During the legislative committee hearings, many stakeholders provided valuable input into the makeup of the

legislation. That input has led to some changes to the definitions in the bill that spell out more clearly who is required to be licensed under the proposal.

Two things became evident from the hearings: There is overwhelming stakeholder support for the aims and objections of the bill, and the consultations have resulted in a fruitful and productive partnership between the government and stakeholders in equipping the private security sector in Ontario to deal with today's challenges. Bill 159 would make it mandatory for those offering security services to be properly licensed, trained and equipped. The proposed act and its accompanying regulations would make training mandatory to obtain a licence for new security personnel, while existing personnel would be required to pass a standardized test.

The proposed act will also level the playing field. Removing many of the current exemptions in the existing act will help ensure that most individuals who provide direct security or investigative services are regulated by the act and meet the same standards. We will be able to correct the current situation where approximately 20,000 individuals providing security services in Ontario are exempt from the existing legislation. It's fair to all practitioners and will help make Ontarians safer.

If passed, the legislation and its accompanying regulations will come into force in the year 2007. Our goal is to give Ontario the most effective and modern legislation and regulations covering the private security industry in Canada. The public supports this initiative to make the province a safer place, the policing community favours the proposed changes to professionalize the security industry, while the industry itself recognizes the need for change and modernization.

The Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2005, is the right kind of legislation for today's Ontario. It will help to make Ontario a safer, stronger and more prosperous place for all of us. Thank you.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph—Wellington):** I'm pleased to add my support to this important piece of legislation. The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services spoke eloquently about the need for the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2005. The changing face of Ontario's society makes the overhaul of the legislative framework of the security industry a necessity. The minister also commented about the great level of support from our stakeholders and the key role they will play in helping us develop effective regulations.

At the very outset, we established a process of consultation with stakeholders, and this has resulted in virtually unanimous support for this legislation from all quarters. We are committed to continuing this process. The private security and investigative services advisory committee will be at the very heart of the process to develop those regulations.

We have addressed the following key areas in this legislation: mandatory licensing for most security practitioners; licence portability; a revised licence appeals process; a new public complaints process; insurance requirements; and increased fines and enforcement



measures, as well as asserting standards, via regulations, for training and testing, code of conduct, uniforms, equipment and vehicles.

On the topic of mandatory licensing, the proposed act will level the playing field. Currently, an estimated 20,000 individuals who provide security services in Ontario are exempt from the existing legislation. The Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2005, will remove most of these exemptions.

During the legislative committee hearings, some concerns were raised with regard to the definition of a security guard, and specifically, who is or isn't included in the definition. We have clarified the definition by specifying that a security guard is a person who performs work for remuneration that consists primarily of guarding or patrolling for the purpose of protecting persons or property. This also clarifies that volunteers are exempt from the legislation.

Under the proposed act, mandatory licensing would now apply, for example, to the Corps of Commissioners, to in-house security personnel, including the retail sector, and to municipal and other employees who perform security duties.

Secondly, the licence portability element of the proposed act will reduce the administrative burdens on employees, employers and the ministry. Portable licences would allow security practitioners and private investigators to move from one company to the next without having to be relicensed each time. Licence portability would also allow part-time practitioners and investigators to work for more than one company at the same time to earn a decent living.

#### 1900

Third, the act would establish a clear licence appeal process. If the registrar of the private investigators and security guards branch is not going to issue a licence, or revokes or fails to renew one, the licensee would, as he or she can do currently, have the right to request a hearing before the registrar. The licensee would have to show cause why the registrar should not take the proposed action. The same process applies if the registrar has attached conditions to a licence renewal or issuance. If the licensee does not agree with the outcome of the registrar's hearing, the Licence Appeal Tribunal of the Ministry of Government Services would hear appeals of decisions made by the registrar. The appeal tribunal could uphold the registrar's decision, vary, grant or restore a licence, or impose conditions on that licence.

The fourth key aspect of the proposed act is the establishment of a public complaints process. Establishing a mechanism to address public complaints was a key recommendation of a coroner's inquest. Under the proposed act, the registrar would receive all public complaints. The complaint would then be referred to an independent facilitator for resolution if the registrar determined that the complaint was related to a potential breach of the code of conduct. This differs from the current system, under which the registrar receives public complaints against security guards or private investigators

and then will often redirect the complaint to the company which is the subject of the complaint. We are obviously changing that so there is a more independent evaluation of the complaint. Bill 159 would add more objective oversight and third party intervention to the complaints system.

The fifth component of the proposed legislation is a critical one and deals with setting standards, via regulations, for training and testing, code of conduct, uniforms, equipment, vehicles and insurance requirements. Training standards need to be high to protect Ontarians and reflect the changes in our province since the current act was adopted in 1966. Made-in-Ontario training standards will be developed, via regulation, building on the existing Canadian General Standards Board curriculum for security practitioners. Any company or institution will be able to deliver training programs if its curricula meet the standards set out by regulations. This will help make training available and accessible in all areas of the province. New applicants will be required to provide written proof of completion of a training program which meets the standards set in the regulations, and applicants will then have to pass a standardized test.

The coroner's inquest made recommendations around training and made it very clear that for those 30,000 people who are currently licensed and for the 20,000 people who are not—that is, 50,000 people—the training standard is currently very inconsistent. It ranges from no training at all to consistent training. For that reason, in order to ensure that everyone is well qualified, we believe that the testing requirements should apply to everyone and that there will be no grandfathering measure in relation to this requirement. However, current licence holders, those who are already recognized, will have the opportunity to take the standardized test without completing the training if the applicant chooses to go that route.

The regulations that will be developed in partnership with our stakeholders will also introduce the first-ever provincially mandated code of conduct for the industry. Many of our stakeholder groups and private security companies have their own codes of conduct, but there is no legislated code for all security practitioners. Bill 159, if passed, will correct that situation.

For many of our partners and many Ontarians, setting standards for uniforms, equipment and vehicles used by security personnel is a very important issue. Many respondents to the 2003 consultation paper favoured making the uniforms of security practitioners distinctly different from police uniforms. The proposed approach in the Private Security and Investigative Services Act is to develop standards to professionalize the industry. The advisory committee will assist us in developing regulations dealing with uniforms. We do recognize that uniforms and equipment play an important role in company identification, and we will work with our partners in that regard. Again, the advisory committee will assist us in developing regulations dealing with equipment and the training required to use it. The advisory committee will

also help us develop the regulations related to vehicles used by security personnel.

The current outdated requirement for a \$5,000 bond by security companies is simply no longer adequate. Updated insurance requirements will support the professionalization of the industry. The advisory committee will consider commercial liability insurance and other types of insurance that might be necessary to better protect Ontarians.

Bill 159 proposes increased fines for non-compliance with the act. Fines for individuals could go up to \$25,000, and they could reach \$250,000 for companies and agencies.

The proposed act would also give more inspection and investigative powers to the ministry's private investigators and security guards branch.

These measures are necessary to better protect Ontarians. Bill 159 represents a huge leap forward for the security industry in our province. With the help of our partners, we will give the industry and Ontarians one of the most modern legislative frameworks for private security anywhere on this continent. It will further professionalize the industry, make its practitioners better trained and help keep Ontarians safe.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** It's kind of warm in here, and I can't seem to convince anyone that it's warm in here. You can tell that I was on the barbecue circuit this summer, though, and maybe that's why it's warm in here.

I've listened to the honourable minister's remarks here. I don't know much about this bill. I was more familiar with the member from Simcoe North's bill, Bill 88, which I think was a little more palatable to the restaurant association and the hotels and people who hire security guards, and for the security guards themselves.

I've also listened to comments from my colleagues that weren't addressed in either of the speeches we heard on the government side tonight; that is, that there is no grandfathering or grandparenting here for the over 30,000 security guards who currently hold licences. You shouldn't have to have a Ph.D. to be a security guard, and you shouldn't have to go through reams of testing in order to get your licence.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** You don't need one to be an MPP.

**Mr. Wilson:** Mr. Kormos says you certainly don't need a Ph.D. to be an MPP, and some of us are living proof of that, I'm sure.

The fact of the matter is, I have not heard anything, and for the rest of the evening I'll listen carefully if the government wants to try to convince us to support this legislation. There's not much in the legislation, in my cursory reading of it, in terms that you're going to do this through an advisory committee and regulations.

One thing I will say on a partisan note, but also on a factual note, is that you would be ballistic when you were in opposition and we did bills and left the details in

regulations. You hated that, and yet it seems to be exactly what's happening in this legislation. So I'll listen carefully.

I have one question, though, perhaps for when the government gets a chance to respond to my comments: Why didn't you just take Mr. Dunlop's bill? It had lots of discussion. If you were really sincere about doing a good job for the security guard industry, forget about partisanship and forget about whether or not Mr. Dunlop gets credit for the bill. Just steal his idea and implement that, and I think we wouldn't be having this discussion.

**1910**

**Mr. Kormos:** It has been a while, hasn't it? It's nice to be back.

I want everybody—the minister, Liberal caucus members, everybody in this chamber—to know that Ms. Sandals did a stellar job of leading this piece of legislation, weak and meagre as it was. Ms. Sandals, the member for Guelph-Wellington, with incredible skill and acumen, did an outstanding bit of work in taking a bill that had so little substance—a sow's ear. And while it's not quite a silk purse or even a Louis Vuitton, she at least got the bill to the point where it is being debated at third reading, and an exciting debate it is as we begin third reading.

It's a debate that could well take a considerable period of time because of the obvious interest that so many members of this assembly have in Bill 159. Why, members of all three parties were riveted during the course of the committee hearings by Ms. Sandals and her stewardship of this bit of major, she would have us believe, policy reform. Ms. Sandals, I tell you, puts David Copperfield to shame in that she, with a little bit of sleight of hand and the classic distraction of the magician, or the court jester, managed to distract most, but not all, of the members of the committee and even had her colleagues in the Liberal caucus vote for it. Well, we didn't, and I'm going to tell you why when we get to our leadoff speech later this evening.

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** It's not often that I would agree with the member from Niagara Centre. But today I would have to, on his glowing remarks on the member for Guelph-Wellington and how she took this piece of legislation out on the road.

As we heard from Minister Kwinter, we can all be very proud that as it went out on the road we were able to bring consensus, transparency, openness and understanding for why this piece of legislation is so needed. Mr. Kwinter mentioned that while in 1966 there were about 4,000 security guards, today we have about 31,000 security guards. We want to make sure, as members of the public, that there is regulation, there are policies and procedures in place, there is a code of conduct. We want to make sure that our security guards have the training and are upholding the highest standards so that they are focused on prevention, so they do know what to do before an incident takes place. We want to make sure they are aware of all the great tools and practices out there so that they can do the best job possible. We also



want to know that our security guards remain licensed. In this bill there would be a mandatory requirement to know if they had ever been convicted of any federal offences for which a pardon had not been granted, so they would not have a licence; also that they are over the age of 18.

There are a number of criteria that we, as the public, want to know are in place. Bill 159, the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, will bring that forward.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I was actually going to take the same approach as the member for Niagara Centre about this bill, but, sadly, I could never do it quite as well as him, so I'm going to try something different; I could never be quite as entertaining as he could be.

I certainly have to ask, if the government over there was so excited about this bill, how could they barely use 20 minutes to tell us about all of its good features? They just had to go over and over and regurgitate and rehash and have the parliamentary assistant do it all over again, because they're not that excited about it at all.

However, the member for Simcoe North did introduce a bill in this Parliament—

**Mr. Kormos:** A good bill.

**Mr. Yakabuski:**—a good bill, Bill 88—that would have accomplished exactly what we needed to do with regard to regulation and changes in the security guard system in the province of Ontario.

So what does this government do? It's typical of what they've been doing, you see. When they latch on to a good Conservative idea, they know that one way or another they're going to work that into the agenda and they're going to work that into the program, but be damned if they're going to let the Tories get any credit for it.

That's what they are doing now with all of these P3s. They're building all of these P3s, and they've entered into a private-public partnership with Bruce Power today with regard to the refurbishment of Units 1 and 2 up at Bruce A. They realize that we seem to come up with the good ideas, and they try to capitalize on them.

We had it in Bill 88, and the member for Guelph-Wellington knows that, but she had to try to spin that bill today as being something concrete. But we know it's only trying to piggyback on the member for Simcoe North.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Guelph-Wellington has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mrs. Sandals:** I would like to thank everyone for their comments and, in particular, the member—oh dear. For which Niagara are you?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Centre.

**Mrs. Sandals:** Niagara Centre. I am sure that there will be another shoe to drop when he comes to his remarks, but having had such Dickensian praise from the member for Niagara Centre, I really can't let it pass, even if it was tongue in cheek, without saying thank you, sir.

I would actually like, however, to comment on one of the many things in this bill that is changing quite significantly, which is the issue of portability of licence.

Right now, we have what to my mind is a very bizarre situation, where security guards do not hold the licence in their own right. A security card is only licensed by virtue of working for a particular company. If they move to a new company, they have to be relicensed; that is, the security guard can never hold the licence in their own right. They have no recognition of their training if they have it. They are completely at the mercy of the companies for whom they work.

What this bill will do in providing portable licensing is to make sure that people who work in the security industry can have their training recognized in their own right, hold their licence in their own right, keep that licence and take it with them if they wish to work for one employer or another employer or another employer. They will be able to maintain the licence in their own right and not be at the mercy of the employer. I would like to suggest that in fact that is just one of the many significant improvements we are making in this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** It's my pleasure to rise tonight on the opposition party's leadoff comments on Bill 159, An Act to revise the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act and to make a consequential amendment to the Licence Appeal Tribunal Act, 1999.

I do appreciate this opportunity, and I'd like to start out this evening by congratulating a lot of people in this room as we enter the second session of this Parliament. First of all, to all you folks who used to sit over here—and now you're able to have a good view of us—I congratulate you on that opportunity. I know that you're very happy to be over there.

1920

I also want to congratulate the people who have been appointed to cabinet: Ms. Broten, and I want to also congratulate her on the arrival of her new twin baby boys; and Mr. Bradley on his appointment as the government House leader. I'm sure it's a wonderful job. But the person I want to congratulate more than anybody is my colleague to the north of me, the good candidate from Parry Sound-Muskoka, Norm Miller, on his appointment as chief opposition whip. I wish Norm all the best in this job. He is a great guy, and he will do a great job of it.

I'm torn on this bill, because there are a lot of things that I don't like about the bill. But I do know that, as Minister Kwinter mentioned, it's 40 years since there have been any kind of amendments to this bill. In fact, as the number of private investigators and security guards rose from 4,000 to 30,000 people in 2004, there's no question that changes are required.

In hindsight, I do want to congratulate Minister Bob Runciman, when he was Solicitor General and minister of community safety, for setting up the task force so that they could actually talk to a lot of people about the requirements. I think there were 600 community groups that were contacted so as to put some of the initial points together—the consultation that was required for this legislation.

I do want to thank you for any of the comments from my private member's Bill 88 that were reflected in Bill 159. I'm going to get into some explanatory notes here in a minute because, as you know, I have an hour to spend tonight, and I know you people are wanting to hear every minute of this one hour. But I can tell you that I do appreciate the fact that as Bill 88 went through the House, it was fully supported by all three parties, including the minister of the time himself. That led us to the government introducing Bill 159.

As I go on in the debate tonight, I want to point out, first of all, why we got to a private member's bill and Bill 159 as a result of the Shand inquiry. I'm going to read the recommendations and those sorts of things in as well. But I wanted to read in the two explanatory notes to the bills and get on to some comments by the PAO, the OPPA and those sorts of folks and go through the bill in a little more detail than what we've heard so far.

By the way, I do also want to congratulate the parliamentary assistant as she guided the bill through the committee hearings and clause-by-clause. I thought she did a stellar performance as well. Although she didn't listen to any of my amendments and she won't bring the regulations back to any kind of committee, I still want to congratulate her on a job well done.

In the explanatory note to Bill 159, it says, "The bill replaces the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act. It regulates private investigators, security guards and those who are in the business of selling the services of private investigators and security guards."

"Licensing requirements are imposed and procedures are put in place for revoking and suspending licences, subject to appeal provisions."

"Offences and regulatory requirements are provided for, as is a process for dealing with complaints from the public."

"The minister may make regulations setting out a code of conduct for private investigators and security guards."

I also wanted to compare it to what we had put in the original Bill 88. I know we're not getting into this, but I want to put it on the record because of looking at Hansard down the road. On Bill 88, the explanatory note—again, the minister did refer to this tonight—says:

"The bill amends the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act."

"It removes the present exemption from the act for members of the Corps of Commissionaires and for private investigators and security guards whose work is confined to acting for only one employer."

"An individual is not eligible for a licence under the act unless the individual has passed the examinations or attained the standards prescribed by the regulations made under the act. A corporation is not eligible for a licence under the act unless a director or officer of the corporation has passed those examinations or attained those standards. The examination and standards must be appropriate for the class of licence for which a person applies and must cover the following areas: the force that a licensee can lawfully use when acting as a private

investigator or security guard and the safe use of firearms and the unlawful means of making arrests, if the licensee is required to use firearms or make arrests, as the case may be, when acting as a private investigator or security guard."

"A licence issued under the act must state the class, if applicable, for which it is issued. The regulations can prescribe terms of a licence, in addition to the terms that the registrar can impose at present."

Just an aside: We're trying to point out here tonight that there's an awful lot left to regulations in Bill 159 that were covered in earlier bills.

"A licence issued or renewed on or after the bill comes into force has a term of no more than one year. The registrar can suspend or cancel the licence under section 14 of the act if the licensee is no longer eligible for the licence. A licence no longer expires when the licensee's employment in respect of which it was issued terminates."

"The bill adds several restrictions for licensees. The uniform that a security guard is required to wear while on duty must not reasonably resemble the uniform of a police officer. The minister responsible for the administration of the act can restrict the markings and colours of a motor vehicle that a security guard uses while on duty, which must not in any event reasonably resemble a marked police vehicle. No licensee while on duty is allowed to wear or use badges or other insignia that reasonably resemble those of a police officer. The regulations can specify restrictions on equipment that a licensee is allowed to use while on duty."

"If the regulations require a licensee to keep books and records, they must include a record of all incidents in which the licensee used force while acting as a private investigator or security guard. The licensee is required to furnish a copy of the record annually to the minister responsible for the administration of the act. The minister is required to make the record available for inspection by the public. The regulations can also set out a code of conduct that licensees are required to comply with when acting as a private investigator or security guard."

"The bill establishes the Private Investigators and Security Guards Complaints Commission composed of members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council who are not and have not been private investigators or security guards. At the direction of the minister responsible for the administration of the act, the commission is required to advise the minister on the enforcement of the act and the regulations. The commission must also submit an annual report to the minister on its activities."

I'm just about done, Mr. Speaker, on Bill 88. I wanted to put it on the record.

"A person can make a written complaint to the commission if the person reasonably believes that an applicant for a licence or a licensee has contravened or is about to contravene the act, the regulations or, in the case of a licensee, a term of the licence of the licensee. Upon receiving a complaint, the commission can require the person about whom the complaint is made or any



licensee to provide information about the complaint. The commission can also appoint inspectors to enter a premises or vehicle in order to investigate the complaint. The commission is required to disclose information that it receives to the registrar if the information relates to the eligibility of an applicant for a licence or a licensee to hold a licence and to the minister responsible for the administration of the act if the information reasonably indicates that a person may be guilty of an offence under the act.

"The penalty for a corporation that is convicted of an offence under the act is increased to a fine of not less than \$50,000 and not more than \$100,000."

I did want to put that on the record tonight as part of Bill 88, which was passed in this House but not carried forward. I wanted to show the House and the folks at home the differences in the explanatory notes and how I thought Bill 88 was much more complete and did not leave so much to regulation.

We got quick movement of this bill in the Legislature because of the Shand inquiry. You all know that the death of Patrick Shand was a result of being involved in an incident in which he had to deal with a couple of security guards, which led to his death. I wanted, in fact, to put on the record tonight the recommendations—and there were 22 recommendations that led to the Shand inquiry that were the backbone of Bill 88 but were diluted with Bill 159.

#### 1930

Recommendation 1 of the Shand inquiry is an amendment to the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act: "The Private Investigators and Security Guards Act ... should be amended to remove the licensing exemption that presently exists for 'proprietary' or in-house security practitioners and members of the Corps of Commissionaires. This amendment will provide for mandatory licensing for all privately employed individuals who, for hire or reward, guard or patrol for the purpose of protecting persons or property in Ontario.... This amendment is not intended to affect the regulation of armoured car companies or armoured car personnel."

The rationale behind that recommendation from the Shand inquiry is: "The current act was passed in 1966. The world and the security industry have changed dramatically since that time. To illustrate, there are now some 50,000 persons employed in the security industry, half of whom are unregulated. Every person employed as a security professional should be licensed by the province" in some way or another. We'll hear a lot about that from the New Democratic Party with their leadoff, I believe.

"In 1966 most security practitioners were watchmen; today they provide a wide variety of services with significant interaction with the public, especially in shopping malls, hospitals, entertainment venues and other locales."

Recommendation 2, on the need for urgent change. As we said, the Shand inquiry came out in April 2004. I followed quickly with Bill 88. I thought it was something

we should deal with very quickly, and I compliment the minister, who brought in his bill, Bill 159, some time later in the fall. I believe he introduced it on December 9, 2004. As a Legislative Assembly, I think we've done fairly well in that area in the fact that we're at least within two years of having this thing passed and implemented—no, three years, if we go right to 2007.

As I said earlier, it had to be implemented as soon as possible, which is the number 2 recommendation. The rationale for it is: "While it is important that all the stakeholders are consulted, the ministry has had many years to consult. When this act was passed in 1966, John Roberts was the Premier of the province and since that time there have been seven more Premiers. Any remaining consultation process should be expedited so that further delays in amendments to the act are avoided. It seems that the issues should already be well known and the ministry should be able to proceed quickly.

"If there are issues that cannot be resolved in the short term, a phased implementation may be appropriate."

As the minister has spoken, we understand that it should be all together by some time in 2007. As the rationale said: "It is important that the government act quickly, responsibly and diligently." I'm a little worried about the "responsibly and diligently" portions here.

The third recommendation of the Shand inquiry was on mandatory training: "The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services ... should create a mandatory training program that all security practitioners must complete as a requirement for their licensing."

The rationale: "Training is the key to providing the necessary skills and knowledge required by security practitioners, especially in use-of-force instances and other areas of interaction with the public. The training is to protect both the security practitioners and the public. If the training is not mandatory for all, some security practitioners may not receive any training or receive sub-standard training and not have the necessary skills and training to reduce risks to the public."

Recommendation 4, on the training program curriculum: "The ministry should create a curriculum for the mandatory training program, through consultation with stakeholders to create industry standards based on best practices.

"For those security practitioners whose duties may include making arrests or the lawful application of force, the minimum level of training should include first aid, CPR and use-of-force training, which identifies the hazards of restraint asphyxia and excited delirium.

"For a security practitioner to receive a licence allowing them to carry or use handcuffs or expandable batons, they must have received and completed relevant training."

Again, this is from the Shand inquiry. The rationale behind that: "There should be multiple levels of training for security practitioners in the province, depending upon job requirements, the expectation of the use of force and the use of handcuffs and expandable batons. The system should be transparent in the interest and the safety of the

public. The public should expect a high standard of professionalism by all security practitioners in the province. The curriculum should provide the basis for the professional standards."

Recommendation 5, licence classification system: "The act should be amended"—in this case, we have a whole new act, but it should be amended—"to provide for the creation of a licensing classification system in which each level or tier reflects the duties that the security practitioner is competent to perform based on the training he or she has received."

"The licensing classification system should also reflect the degree to which the security practitioner would be expected to interact with the public."

"The licensing classification system should ensure that no security practitioner may carry or use handcuffs or expandable batons without completing relevant training."

The rationale is: "One level of licence or training will not meet the demands of all types of security requirements. For example, the requirements for a night watchman are different from the requirements for shopping mall security in that the use of force may be called upon when dealing directly with the public." This is something that is a very strong concern of ours, the different classifications.

Recommendation 6, training programs and persons with disabilities: "Any certified training program, by way of its physical requirement, should not prevent individuals with disabilities, or any persons incapable of completing physical training from pursuing gainful employment as a licensed security practitioner, if his or her duties do not include making arrests or the lawful application of force."

The rationale is: "Equal opportunity for all individuals is an important factor in our society." Of course, that is based again on the Shand inquiry.

Recommendation 7 of the Shand inquiry, recertification: "Those security practitioners whose duties may include making arrests or the lawful application of force should be recertified annually with respect to use-of-force training."

"All security practitioners should be recertified for CPR annually."

The rationale behind that: "The training regarding use of force is changing constantly and this ensures that security practitioners are up to date with modern training practices across the industry."

"Recertification of CPR is currently a best practice in most industries where CPR training is required."

Recommendation number 8, licence identification and renewal: "Licences should identify the classification of the security practitioner and what equipment he or she is authorized to use such as handcuffs and expandable batons."

"Licences should be renewed annually."

The rationale behind that: "Employers, the ministry and the public will know the competency level of the employee."

Recommendation 9, identification: "Where a security practitioner is in uniform, licensing information should

be visibly displayed on a badge including a photograph, licence number, company name and classification."

"When a security practitioner is not in uniform the identification must be readily available."

The rationale, and we heard a lot about this during the hearings: "This will provide recognition to the public, avoid confusion with the police and identify the person as a security practitioner."

Recommendation 10, method of training delivery: "The mode of delivery of the mandatory training regime for security practitioners shall be approved by the ministry, after consultation with stakeholders. A manual or guide to training and requirements should be published and updated regularly by the ministry."

The rationale behind that is: "There are many possible methods of training including community colleges, in-house training and computer assisted training. Training should be flexible and tailored to meet the needs of the industry throughout the province without reducing quality." Again, it was mentioned that the training be done in a lot of cases through the community colleges. In the presentations at committee, we had at least two community colleges that wished to provide training. I believe that it was Fanshawe and Georgian that both came forward with some kind of proposal to look at training down the road.

The eleventh recommendation is certified trainers: "Mandatory training should be delivered by qualified trainers certified by the Ministry. There should be an established competency level defined by the ministry."

Again, the rationale: "The quality and standards of training are vitally important. Trainers and those persons instructing the trainers must meet the highest standards relating to subject matter and adult educational techniques."

"The coroner's office should be consulted in the development of use-of-force training programs."

Recommendation number 12, record keeping and evaluation: "The ministry should develop a mode of evaluation and a system of record keeping for the delivery of mandatory training."

The rationale behind that: "To ensure that the training regime is effective, complete and accurate records of training should be kept and those records and other means used to evaluate the training programs on a regular basis."

"This record could also be used to track the training of an individual security practitioner over the life of their employment as a security practitioner."

#### 1940

The 13th recommendation is the enforcement system: "The ministry should implement an effective system of enforcement with powers of inspection and audit. Sufficient resources should be made available to ensure compliance with the licensing and training requirements of the act."

The rationale: "The amended act will only be as effective as the system of enforcement. This will be particularly true in the early stages of implementation."



The 14th recommendation, the advisory board: "The ministry should create an advisory board or committee comprised of stakeholders to facilitate communication and the exchange of information between the stakeholders, and for the purposes of establishing the curriculum of the mandatory training program."

The rationale behind that: "The advisory board or committee should be constituted as soon as possible to begin their work in conjunction with the ministry prior to the passing of the amended legislation." I understand that there are some advisory boards in place, and they will be there to help draft the regulations as well.

"The purpose of the formation of an advisory board or committee is to provide a breadth of experience and advice to the ministry but the ministry is ultimately responsible and should ensure that it is not used as a mechanism to delay or obstruct the process of implementation."

The 15th recommendation is the oversight body: "The ministry should create an independent oversight body to deal with complaints by members of the public in relation to the provision of security services. Access to this body should be readily available and widely publicized."

The rationale is: "Security practitioners must be held accountable for their actions and the public trust ensured. Publicity should include a 1-800 number and other means of access."

Recommendation 16, the portability of licences: "The act should be amended to provide for the portability of individual licences."

The rationale being: "Presently, licences are obtained through the employer. Portability will allow the movement of personnel within the industry in Ontario and eliminate current delays in obtaining licences for new employees who have been previously licensed."

The 17th recommendation is the funding model: "The funding model for the mandatory training program in British Columbia may be considered as a funding model for Ontario."

The rationale behind that is: "Training programs should be funded from an annual licensing fee charged to companies and individuals and there should be no additional costs to the taxpayers."

Recommendation 18, reporting the use of force: "Licensed security practitioners should be required to report any use of force to their employer. The employer's responsibility should be to report use of force statistics annually to the ministry. The ministry should report the statistics publicly on an annual basis."

The rationale behind that is: "Record-keeping and reporting will identify changing patterns of activity as well as the need for changes in the training, licensing and possibly the act itself."

"This may also identify abuses of the system."

"The statistics should be reported by the ministry to ensure that the public is informed."

I don't think we have that at all, in any way whatsoever, in the updated Bill 159, and how we're going to track that with the public is a little—I'd ask the minister

or the parliamentary assistant to respond to that later, if she could.

Recommendation 19, the excited delirium memorandum: "The coroner's office should update memo number 636, dated June 19, 1995, exhibit 4 at the inquest, for distribution to the security industry."

The rationale: "This is a document that contains vital and possibly life-saving information. It is of the utmost importance that the security industry and all persons dealing with use of force and restraint are aware of its contents."

Recommendation 20, training of persons authorized by an employer to make arrests: "If an employer designates employees to make arrests for property related offences those employees should have the same licence and training as is required of other security practitioners who are authorized to make arrests."

The rationale: "Proper training may reduce the risk of injury to the employee or to the person being arrested."

Recommendation 21, policy communication to employees: "Explicit direction both verbal and written must be communicated to each employee. A sign-off sheet must be filed in his or her personnel file as to their understanding of the expectations of the retailer with respect to the manner in which the apprehension of shop thieves is to be conducted. This communication and sign-off must be communicated on a regular basis, preferably annually."

The rationale: "This ensures compliance and that the employee is aware of and understands the policy and their responsibilities."

Finally, recommendation 22, the compliance: "We recommend that failure to comply with the act and its regulations may incur significant fines and other penalties including loss or suspension of licences to the practitioner and or company."

Rationale: "We feel strongly that the provisions of the act especially with respect to training must be adhered to by all parties."

Those are the Shand recommendations. I wanted to put that on the record. I have a problem in the regulations and I'm worried that down the road some of these may come back to haunt us. I wanted to have clearly identified in the Hansard what the Shand inquiry recommendations were so that we can actually compare that as time goes on. The year 2007 will roll around quickly, and if we do have problems with this bill, then I want to make sure that it's been put on the record what those recommendations were as a result of the Shand inquiry.

I heard some of the comments. The minister made it sound as though everybody was so supportive of this piece of legislation. Generally speaking, as we dealt with the legislation, I think that people wanted to clean up the act; they wanted to get some updated versions, the same as the Shand inquiry reported. But not everybody came out with glowing remarks on this bill. In fact, there are a lot of groups that are hesitant. I know the minister mentioned the support of the OPPA and the PAO and all these different organizations, where certainly they did

come out and they mentioned different times in the announcing of the bill—in some of their reports or some of their deputations to the government, they actually made comments that there were some positive things about it.

But I wanted to put this on the record. This is from the Ontario Provincial Police Association. I wanted to make sure that this was clearly identified in the bill as well. It says here, and I'll read this part:

"It is the position of the Ontario Provincial Police Association that police and private security uniforms should be completely distinct from each other. Security uniforms must not contain any shoulder patches or insignias resembling police uniforms. We do not believe it is in the interest of the community and public safety to arm or equip private security with any type of weapons or use of force articles such as handcuffs and batons." I made that point because the OPPA are saying not even handcuffs and batons. I know we're not going to be listening to them completely, but they did put that on the record.

"The use of canine by security agencies should not be allowed unless there are strict regulations regarding use of canine and certified accredited training for all canine handlers. Vehicles utilized by the industry should not resemble police vehicles in any form. The use of roof bars on private security vehicles should be prohibited unless used in specific locations such as airports or construction sites. This would ensure members of the public are not confused as to whether the vehicles represent police or the private security industry."

I put that on there because, as we talked about the original formation of a new act, it was my understanding that it was really the parapolice that we were more concerned about. One of the problems we've got is that basically it now includes everybody that's got anything whatsoever to do with—a night watchman, a guard in a mall, somebody looking after a construction site. Some of these guys have been working at night watchman-type jobs for many decades, and that's really all the training they have. As we know, there's no grandfathering to that.

As I said before, the difference between Bill 159 and Bill 88 is that so much more will be dealt with by regulation. I've got a problem with regulation. I think someone yelled out earlier about the Nutrient Management Act, and I have a problem with the Nutrient Management Act. I know that if you're in government, you want to do it by regulation.

**Mr. Kormos:** It doesn't make it right.

**Mr. Dunlop:** It doesn't make it right; you're right.

The elected officials really are left out of a lot when it comes to regulatory changes or regulations. As you know, a regulation can be changed just by putting it in the Gazette with a 30- or 40-day comment period, and those changes come into effect with a rubber stamp and the general public doesn't know a lot about it.

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Why I'm hesitant about the regulations is that I've already been caught in this once on my own private

member's bill, Bill 105. It was dealt with in this House, and I think it was passed by 82 to 2—two people voted against it. At the time, I think the Liberals in opposition all supported the bill, and our party in government, the Progressive Conservatives, supported it as well, and it was passed in this House.

If you remember, Bill 105 was about allowing an individual, who felt he had come in contact with someone with an infectious disease as a result of being a good Samaritan or an emergency service worker—that type of thing—to quickly find out through a blood sample whether or not the person he had come in contact with had any kind of infectious disease.

We had really good public hearings here at the Park. We did a lot of work on the bill and had great support with all the stakeholders. But let me read a letter that I got from a gentleman in my riding. This gentleman's name is Greg Bruce. He's a supervisor of operations with the County of Simcoe Paramedic Services. I want to put this on the record because this is a case of the bill not working as a result of regulations:

"Dear Mr. Dunlop

"I am a supervisor of operations with the County of Simcoe Paramedic Services. I am also an infection control practitioner for the service. In my role I am responsible for ensuring there is proper follow-up to paramedic exposure to disease.

"In the past six months, I have had to deal with a number of staff who have had exposures to blood and as a result needed to use the application for mandatory testing as outlined by Bill 105, the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Each time I have had to deal with it, significant problems have occurred and testing has not been ordered.

"I have discovered many areas where this legislation has failed emergency workers. I am concerned there is nowhere for workers to turn in order to protect them following an occupational exposure to blood.

"I understand you were involved in bringing this bill to Parliament. I have also been informed this bill has fallen short of your intent due to a watering down process as it went through consent. If I am mistaken I apologize. All I am trying to do is have the issues of paramedics addressed so we can maximize their safety when they have an exposure to blood and body fluids.

"I would like to have the chance to meet with you to discuss the problems I have encountered and find out if there is any way these problems can be fixed in the future. Please feel free to contact me at any time to arrange a meeting.

"I look forward to your response."

That's signed by Greg Bruce, a supervisor of operations and an infection control officer with the County of Simcoe Paramedic Services.

All I'm really saying is that you can sometimes get a bill passed in this House and the intent seems great, like the private security guards act here tonight, like the Nutrient Management Act, probably like the bill coming in for water source protection or even Bill 105. But do



you know what? That bill has been held up at the Ministry of Health. There are certain people in the bureaucracy at the Ministry of Health who did not want that bill to pass and they've held it up so that paramedics and emergency service workers in this province cannot take advantage of it. It's very sad that we passed it in this House and it becomes useless to those people down the road, and I feel badly about that. Any letter I've written or any comments I've made to the media, etc., have just fallen on deaf ears. It looks like the ministry does not want that bill to pass; it's as plain and simple as that. They don't care if it passes. They just don't want to ever have it enacted in any way whatsoever, and there's a perfect example of it. I'm very disappointed.

That's why when I talk about regulations or regulatory changes, I'm so concerned about where we go beyond here. As the parliamentary assistant said in the hearings, we won't have another chance to review the regulations. It's going to be done by the expert advisory panel or a body of all these experts who are going to say what's right and what's wrong, that we don't know what we're talking about here. But when there's a problem down the road, we get the letters, the e-mails, the faxes and the phone calls. That's why I wanted to see more detail in the bill itself and less in regulation. As I go to caucus with it, that's why I'm having a hard time saying to our caucus members whether we should or should not support this. We definitely support the intent of the legislation; there is no question there. It's just that I don't want to see it get caught up so that we never get to use it.

Now, a little bit about public safety in general, because there is lots to talk about with this government. I wanted to also put some other things on the record. The throne speech the other day, and the government's commitment to community safety—I've got to tell you, I was disappointed. We had basically nothing in the throne speech on community safety or even on this type of thing today. But what they did put in was this. It's on page 22, and you could just about lose it if you're not careful. It says, "Keeping our people moving is important. Keeping them safe is even more important."

"Your government will work with our municipal partners to ensure there are 1,000 more police officers on the street by 2007." By the way, that's the fifth time that was publicly announced, the 1,000 cops on the street. None of them have been hired yet, but in two years that's the fifth time they've announced it, so congratulations. I suspect it will be announced many more times before we actually have someone, before the government actually pays for a police officer.

"The first Canadian province to require hospitals to report gunshot wounds to the police will continue to urge the federal government to toughen sentences for gun crimes." I'm hoping some of my colleagues will talk about this, as our leader did today. We're going to report gunshot wounds. There were already 45 American states reporting them. I made a number of amendments in that bill as well, so that we could have mandatory reporting of knife wounds as well, not gunshot wounds only. The

second part of that paragraph was that we're going to "urge the federal government to toughen sentences for gun crimes." You know what? That, I think, is not going to happen.

"And your government will expand programs for youth, so there are positive alternatives to guns and gangs and violence."

"Ontario will be tough on crime—and tough on the causes of crime." When they're saying that, they're forgetting that what they're telling the bureaucrats in the justice ministry is, "You can be tough on crime as long as you get rid of \$300 million in your budgets."

So that's the throne speech. I wanted to put that on the record, because I'm not even sure if His Honour read that part in the throne speech the other day. I think he was embarrassed by it, so he maybe skipped that part.

But the really good part is when I go back—we're talking about the government's community safety platform. I don't know if the House leader has a copy or not, but I keep a copy of the Liberal platform handy. I like to refer to it once in a while to see what their platform was in these different areas. I wanted to just say what the government said back in the spring of 2003 and right up to today. In their platform, called "Safe Communities": "More police on the street. We will put 1,000 more cops on the street. The number of police officers per capita in Ontario has dropped more than 8% in the past 10 years. We need more police officers to keep our communities safe. Over the next four years, we will put 1,000 new police officers on the street ... for community policing."

That's over the next four years. You're two years in, and not a soul has been hired. In fact, we've had to pressure the government—I guess we put out, in our caucus, five or six press releases on this to pressure the government to do anything. Finally, they say now that they're in a program where we might see some hired next spring, but they will not be paid for. There won't be one penny coming out of the 2005-06 budget. So that leaves us one year. If they hired all the 1,000 cops for 2006-07, you'd only have one year of the government actually paying for our police officers.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** My understanding is—I hope they don't try to pull that one. We want the government to hire 1,000 new bodies, not replace people who are retiring and try to count those. That may in fact be the case, but that's where we have a problem. I think we'll be keeping a close eye on it.

One of the neat things about being in opposition is that in the first couple of years of the government's mandate, nobody wants to come out against the government and say anything negative because they're afraid of repercussions against them. But after a while—

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I remember saying that about you guys.  
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**Mr. Dunlop:** But now they're all coming forward. The bureaucrats are coming forward, even some of your

staffers are coming forward now, and they're telling us all these little secrets of what you're doing behind the scenes. Even some of the feds are coming forward and telling us some of their stories. There are some neat things happening. It's a great time to be in community safety, because guys are afraid that you're not going to get elected again and they're hoping to get jobs with the next government, which will be John Tory's government, so now they're coming forward with some very positive information for us to look at.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** I won't go there.

**Mr. Kormos:** You might want to cross over, Marie.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Yes, come on over.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** I said, "Go down with your ship, baby."

**Mr. Dunlop:** OK.

"We will give additional resources to Ontario's police intelligence services.

"The number of dangerous biker gangs in Ontario is increasing, the illegal drug industry is thriving and threats to our communities from organized crime and street gangs are growing.

"Our police forces need the resources to track organized crime activities and keep communities safe. We will provide additional support for police intelligence services to ensure that our various police forces can work together to protect all Ontarians.

"Halting hate crimes

"We will expand the number of hate crime units in the province.

"Since 1996, there has been a 93% increase in the number of hate crimes in Ontario. We will stand up for all Ontarians. We will not tolerate hate crimes.

"We will provide support for dedicated hate crime units across the province."

I wish somebody would announce where some of these things are actually happening. I haven't seen any fancy press announcements on the hate crime units or any of the above, but I'm hoping that before long the minister will get before his red board with the white writing behind it—you know, "Dalton likes safe communities," and that sort of thing—and we can get some of these announced as well, because so far we haven't seen them.

"More prosecutors

"We will put more prosecutors in our courts.

"Catching criminals will do little good if we cannot prosecute them. Huge courtroom backlogs delay and sometimes deny justice.

"We will hire 50 new prosecutors to focus on the most serious cases."

I'm sure it's all cleaned up now; I'm sure all of this has been cleaned up. There are no problems and no backlogs in the court system any more. So congratulations; the court system is now fixed. Did you see the front page of the Toronto Star today?

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** That's because of the jokers you guys appointed as JPs.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Now I'm hearing a comment saying that the JPs who have been appointed are jokers. Isn't it embarrassing that somebody would actually say that in this House? That's what he said: "jokers." It's unbelievable.

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** You guys appointed them.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Well, I don't happen to think the JPs are jokers. Maybe the Minister of Labour thinks that JPs are jokers in this province. I'm somebody who doesn't believe that, the same as I don't believe the parole office should be eliminated and put into the hands of the National Parole Board, and you're doing that as we speak too.

"Firm but fair

"We will take a firm but fair approach with young offenders.

"Letting young offenders off lightly only encourages more crime down the road. Treating them as if they are hardened adult criminals, without any attempt at guidance and rehabilitation, has the same result." I guess you're fixing that too.

"We will exercise Ontario's right to transfer dangerous young offenders to adult court and we will demand that the federal government identify dangerous young offenders who pose a threat to their communities."

It would be nice if the minister or the Attorney General would report exactly what they've done in dealing with the federal government on toughening sentences. I understand that according to the platform they were going to do a lot of work in that area, and I don't think they've done anything. But maybe some day the minister will be able to come out with a ministerial statement and really enlighten us on just how well things are going with the relationship. I don't know if that's got anything to do with the \$5.8 billion that they keep talking about, but we definitely have a problem in the federal government tightening the laws.

"We will hire 100 new parole and probation officers to help protect the public.

"The national average caseload for parole and probation officers is one officer for every 70 offenders. In Ontario today, officers handle an average of 121 offenders.

"This overwhelming caseload is putting the public at risk. We will hire an additional 100 officers to reduce caseloads and better protect Ontarians."

I think you've hired 17, and the remaining ones of the 55 you've hired are all on one-year contracts; they're not permanent employees. Is it 17 or 18 you've hired who are permanent, and the rest of the 55 are on one-year contracts. So you haven't done the 100 new officers but you have one-year contracts for around 40, or 38 of them, or something like that.

"We will protect our kids against the dangers of Internet stalkers.

"Police tell us that pedophiles and other criminals increasingly use the Internet to prey on children."

We know about that.

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** Are you going to get back to—



**Mr. Dunlop:** I'm talking about your platform and community safety.

We know you're a dismal failure in this area. The only new money that has been put toward child pornography or Internet luring has been money from the victims' justice fund. The Attorney General made a splashy announcement on that; he gave them \$5 million from a fund that already existed. Now we understand from the study they came back with that they need about \$18 million to start on this one. It's my understanding that as we speak right now nothing has been done in that area. So we know that we've got some huge problems in that area as well. I thought that people would like to hear a little bit about the Liberal platform. It's always interesting to go back.

I've only got 11 minutes left. I want to mention a couple of things that we did. The Progressive Conservative Party did in fact put in three amendments, one on subsection 4(2) of the bill:

"Training required

"(2) No licence shall be issued unless the registrar is satisfied that the applicant has passed the prescribed examinations or has attained the prescribed standards of a level of training appropriate to the class of licence being applied for."

I wanted to mention that because we felt that that was an important amendment based on the Shand inquiry. Of course, the ministry refused to listen to that. They say it'll be hidden in the regulations and a little bit further down in some of the finer detail; apparently, it's in there as well. But they turned that down. They passed all their own motions. That was amazing. I thought in this era of democratic renewal they'd listen to everybody's amendments. They didn't.

We also made amendments—section 38.1 of the bill:

"38.1 A licensee shall keep a record, containing all prescribed particulars, of all incidents in which the licensee used force while acting as a private investigator or security guard, and shall furnish a copy of the record annually to the minister on or before the prescribed date."

We thought it was really important that everybody be responsible for keeping a log of anything where there was use of force. The government said that amendment wasn't necessary and they turned that one down as well.

There was one final one on the code of conduct. I'll read that as well:

"(1.1) The code of conduct must include standards respecting,

"(a) when a private investigator or security guard may use force and the level of force that may be used in carrying out his or her work;

"(b) activities, normally performed by a police officer, that may not be performed by a private investigator or security guard; and

"(c) when a private investigator or security guard is obligated to call in the services of either the Ontario Provincial Police or the local municipal police service, or both."

We were told that that wasn't necessary either, that it was all covered in the bill and it would be all covered in

regulations, and we'd take it from there. So all of our amendments were turned down. We were disappointed in that, but we understand as well.

I just have a few minutes left to sum up. I wanted to say that although we—excuse me.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Take all the time you want. They'll give us more.

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**Mr. Dunlop:** Thank you, to my colleague.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the government's record on law and order, not only on this bill but on everything they've done to date. I don't think they put it in the throne speech, but certainly bureaucrats and staffers have come forward and mentioned that you're asking them to cut \$300 million from the justice budgets: law and order, community safety, and from Minister Bryant's ministry. We know that's probably true, and we would appreciate knowing just what they are expecting in law and order. If you're trying to cut \$300 million, we want to know where it's coming from.

The 1,000 cops: We've been through that already tonight but, again, you've announced it five times. No police have been hired. We keep talking about it. Everybody is talking about it, but until we actually see new officers in uniform, it will be a high priority for our party, as the opposition, to try to draw attention to that.

In the previous government we had called for \$1 million for a police helicopter for the Metro police service. I guess Mayor Miller doesn't want it. I understand the minister shaved it out of the budget as well. It was in for the 2003-04 budget. But the bottom line is that the next thing they do is turn around and go back to the airplane surveillance of traffic. I've seen a fancy photo op with the minister standing beside—I thought he was going to be Snoopy there for a minute. I thought he was going to hop in the plane and actually take off. But I understand that the airplane surveillance works very well. I can't for the life of me see why they would cut the money for the Toronto Police Service. It's the biggest police service in our country and they don't have a helicopter. They have to borrow Halton region's, I believe it is. By the same token, the minister is out there saying, "Boy, this airplane surveillance is great. It saves having a cop on the ground in a car." So I don't know where they're coming from. Anyhow, I wanted to bring the helicopter to your attention.

Mandatory reporting: Their only bill passed to date on law and order, in two years, is the mandatory reporting of gunshot wounds. I want to go right back to Bob Runciman. The mandatory reporting bill was a decent bill, following on Bob Runciman's resolution that called for mandatory reporting, as well as knife wounds. They went halfway there. They got the mandatory reporting of the gunshot wounds. Every time I hear them talking now—they did a couple of fancy photo ops in front of the hospitals etc. A couple of the members' statements today talked about mandatory reporting and what a great thing that was for gun violence. I wonder how many people reported their gunshot wounds this weekend.

The other bill coming forward—I guess we're going to debate it tomorrow night—is the grow-op bill. It's not a bad bill, in a way, but it doesn't mean an awful lot. It doesn't cover crystal meth or any of those sorts of things. We've got that whole issue of crystal meth. I understand the minister found \$230,000 to build a lab at the police college. That was good. I talked to people who said, "Why do they need a lab? Why don't they just go to an illegal crystal meth lab and show the cops what that's like; keep that around?" Anyhow, it looks good to have an official opening down at the police college so that Dalton and the minister can go down and have a fancy ribbon-cutting of the crystal meth lab at the police college.

Internet luring and child pornography: Not a lot has been done in that area. We know the police need resources in that area. They've been cut in a number of areas, especially the Ontario Provincial Police. They're getting none of the new police officers, if they are hired. Of course, Project P and those areas need a tremendous amount of resources so they can carry forward in that area. It's a very serious area.

There have been cuts to the traffic budgets; we know that. Cardboard cops is what I say. Put a cardboard cop in a cardboard car on the 401 or the 400 and people will slow down because it's a cardboard one, and then surveillance will be done in the air.

CISO cuts: I understand about \$1.7 is million being cut out of the CISO budget. That's the Criminal Intelligence Service of Ontario. Nobody really wants to come forward and tell us that exactly. I think they're trying to upload that to the federal government.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** That will be a first.

**Mr. Dunlop:** No, you've got others. You've got the parole board coming to the minister. Anyhow, the CISO cuts are being uploaded.

The parole board: We've got lots more coming on that in the next few days. I'll be interested in that.

The taser cuts: The minister made a promise to help police services with taser guns—not happening.

Of course, the big one is gun violence, which our leader made an announcement on today. He asked a question in the House, and a press release. It's getting worse. We're losing lives in Ontario. We're losing lives right here in Toronto—what is it again?—61 homicides, 41 resulting from shootings. Last year there were 64 murders the entire year, 27 resulting from gun violence. So gun violence is increasing. The government is doing absolutely nothing about it; that's the bottom line here.

They sort of come in waves as far as what I see happening. We had that first wave of gun violence right after the election, and this past summer was just terrible with how many lives were lost. We've got a huge issue in that area. I think it's an issue that the government—I think they mentioned one word about a gun or something in the throne speech, and that's it. So we're ignoring that particular area. I guess we're supposed to shut our mouths and not say anything about it, but the bottom line is that people are losing their lives, and the police don't have the resources to fight this the way they should.

I really appreciate the opportunity to do this lead-off tonight.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Tell us a little bit about your bill, Bill 88.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Well, we've talked about Bill 88 before. It's been a good bill. It should have been passed, but it wasn't.

Our concern here is the regulations around Bill 159. As I mentioned earlier, when you don't know what is coming forward with those regulations, you become very hesitant to support the bill. On the other hand, as I sit here, I appreciate the fact that the bill was brought forward and that we are debating it. It's something that most stakeholders think should have been done at some point. They're not entirely supportive of it, but at the same time, they don't know the end result. The end result could be the loss of a lot of jobs in our province for those companies and businesses. Whether it's a restaurant, the hotel industry or the hospitality industry, we need to know that jobs will not be lost as a result of regulations brought in around the security of their buildings etc. So thank you very much to everyone for allowing me to say a few words tonight.

I'm looking forward to the comments of my colleague from Niagara Centre, in the NDP leadoff, because he had some very strong concerns about the bill and the job losses as well.

With that—I've just got 40 seconds left—I'll pay compliments again to my good friend Minister Kwinter. Although I often criticize him here in this House, in my role as the critic, I do have a great deal of respect for Monty Kwinter and his history in this building. Obviously, he's been doing a fairly decent job as the minister or he would have been replaced. I think he tries to keep things quiet and whack away at the \$300 million in cuts he's supposed to make and try to answer the questions properly.

I thank you again, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to speak tonight.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** It is clear that the member for Simcoe North and opposition critic had much more to contribute but he ran out of time. I would like to move unanimous consent that he be granted additional time to debate this issue.

**The Acting Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent? I heard a no.

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**Mr. Kormos:** I sat through the course of the comments made by the member for Simcoe North and, once again, when Mr. Dunlop speaks, people in this chamber listen. I was proud to have served with him on the legislative committee that reviewed this legislation. Mr. Dunlop, as usual, brought incredibly skilful analysis to the matter. He displays that once again in his dissection of the bill during the course of his one hour here this evening. I am sure that Mr. Dunlop's constituents in Simcoe North are not only pleased but sleeping easier



tonight, knowing that he is the justice critic for the official opposition, the Conservatives.

It was incredibly valuable for Mr. Dunlop to make reference to portions of the throne speech and create that context in which Bill 159 has to be considered. I'm going to be asking Mr. Dunlop for some of those same portions, especially about expediting cases through the courts, because the Attorney General's comments that were reported in the paper this morning revealed a plan that has as its basis the complete deletion of rules of evidence in the province of Ontario as a way of expediting provincial offences matters, especially in so-called highway traffic courts. It's a good plan and I have no doubt that it will work. The problem is that in places where they have used these tactics, the walls have come down.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I did listen with interest to the member from Simcoe North speaking about Bill 159, the Private Security and Investigative Services Act, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, if I could just share with you a personal experience, I think it was in my third year at university and I was looking for a summer job. There was an opportunity for that summer job to become a security guard. The interesting thing about this was that there were about three or four of us who were hired, all university students. The security agency was run by a retired general from the Canadian Armed Forces, a very nice fellow. We all thought because he was a retired general that he would have a great deal of expertise in the security field.

The only thing that we got—they gave us these uniforms, they gave us a flashlight and several other things, but there was no training. As a university student—and my buddies, who all got hired—I didn't have a clue of what to do. We were given a uniform and told to go to work: "Protect this. Do this."

**Mr. Kormos:** How did you do?

**Mr. Leal:** Very well, I say to the member for Niagara Centre. But I thought that for what was expected of us certainly there was a need to provide some framework and training.

I do note that through the Shand inquiry we have removed exemptions, we've brought in mandatory training, and we have developed a standard curriculum which includes use-of-force training if a particular security guard is involved in that area. The training is to be approved by the ministry. Complaints, which I think is an important feature of the bill, will be adjudicated by a number of independent facilitators. By and large, I think this bill goes a long way to clean up what one could say is a ballooning industry in Ontario because of changing needs in the community and the need for some areas to have security guards. I think Bill 159 goes a long way in achieving those goals.

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I too want to add my voice in support of the comments from my colleague from Simcoe North, who has spoken quite eloquently and in quite a bit of detail about this bill, and more generally about issues around community safety, something which he has committed himself to personally

and professionally for the time that he has been here at Queen's Park on behalf of his constituents. He has enunciated several concerns. I wish to put on the record the same point he has, but perhaps slightly differently.

In my 21 years in this Legislature, we have never had such a long break, from mid-June to mid-October, all of this time in preparation for a throne speech and a new direction for the government, and yet I notice on the docket that we are debating three bills that are left over from over a year ago. I'm at a loss to understand why this government felt the need to call for a throne speech which had scant little, if any, reference at all to community safety issues, to policing issues, to justice reform and to protecting the citizens of this province.

Those are the comments which my colleague from Simcoe North has so eloquently put on the record. I think they are important because over the course of the next year and a half we are going to see a justice—an Attorney General and Solicitor General—agenda change in this province rather dramatically. It's something which those members of privy council are privy to, but Liberal backbenchers have absolutely no idea what's coming down the pipe from the philosophy espoused and the cost-cutting in the justice area being presented by this government.

So I want to commend and thank my colleague from Simcoe North for his vigilance and his concerns in these areas. They're quite justified.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal (London—Fanshawe):** I'm standing up this evening to show my support for Bill 159. I was listening to Minister Kwinter talking about the details and also the explanation that came after from my colleague Ms. Sandals.

It's a wonderful bill, I believe. It's gives the strength and the ability to the security guards and the private investigators to learn and to be trained, because as we listened to the minister speaking about the time and age we live in, I think everything has changed. I think we need some kind of protection and security, especially the people who are in charge of securing many different facilities in different places.

I was listening to the member from Simcoe North talking about his bill. He went over it for almost half an hour, maybe 45 minutes, talking about the wonderful bill he presented in the past. We are not saying no. He had a good intent when he started to talk about the bill, but there was a lack of details and a lack of many different elements we can use and apply in real life. That's why Bill 159 came to replace it, to speak to the issues directly and also to maintain the connection with the people.

As we listened to many different speakers, I think Bill 159 came after long consultation with many different stakeholders across the province in order to have some kind of curriculum, some kind of training system, to have good, wonderful people have the ability and have the technique and have the knowledge to protect the people in Ontario. That's why Bill 159 came after long consultation with different stakeholders across the province, to make sure that whoever gets the position is well trained

and knowledgeable about different issues and about the law, because he or she supports protecting the public.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member from Simcoe North has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I want to thank the member from London—Fanshawe, my colleague from Burlington, Jeff Leal from Peterborough and my colleague Peter Kormos from Niagara Centre for their comments.

Again, we will be discussing tomorrow in our caucus meeting just exactly what our plans are with this bill, because, as I said before, I am torn. I know that we wanted the bill to come forward, because it hasn't been changed since 1966. It will be 40 years next year. By the time this thing is proclaimed and then actually implemented, it will be about 41 or 42 years. So no one is questioning that that is a good move on behalf of the government or any private members. We're trying to resolve some issues here.

But again, I just want to point out to the members opposite and to everybody in this House that I'm very leery of so much being left to regulation. It's not that you can't trust it, but it's how it's interpreted. We are the ones who hear back later on when a bill is not working. If it's going to affect a segment of our economy, whether it's the hospitality industry or maybe the nightclub industry or security guards in malls, around construction sites, whatever it may be, we have to be concerned if it starts affecting them. That's why I'm so leery about having so much in regulation. I think we've found before that sometimes these things have the best of intentions, but we turn around and the regulations come out and there's a problem we didn't perceive. Anyhow, I want to thank you for the opportunity to comment tonight, Mr. Speaker, and look forward to further debate of Bill 159 on third reading.

2030

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Kormos:** I'm pleased to be able to participate in the commencement of third reading debate on Bill 159. Here we are: It's 8:30 in the evening on a Monday. I know there are people watching right now; for the life of me I don't know why. I checked the television listings, and on TVO right now you've got Studio 2 with Steve Paikin and Paula Todd. Just think: If the six people watching us now all tuned in to TVO, they would double the viewership and increase the ratings of Studio 2 by 100%. Steve Paikin would probably line himself up for another salary increase. But if the very erudite analysis of Studio 2 isn't to people's liking, I notice that on CHCH TV there's Surface, episode 5, "Animal control officers question ... Miles and Phil."

**Interjection:** I've got to go.

**Mr. Kormos:** That could have something to do with pit bulls; I don't know. But the most interesting listing at 8:30 p.m. is on the Shopping Channel.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Oh.

**Mr. Kormos:** Listen to this, my friend from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke; maybe you should rush home. This program on the Shopping Channel is Tax Evasion: The

Amnesty Answer. If people have a far greater interest in tax evasion and the amnesty answer, I'd encourage them now to pick up the remote and get themselves on to the Shopping Channel.

Look, I wasn't being facetious when I commended Ms. Sandals. It was a pleasure to work with her on the committee. She and I disagreed from time to time during the course of the committee; I suspect we're going to disagree during the course of third reading debate. We're going to disagree on some things; we're going to agree on a whole lot of others. But again, Ms. Sandals took this bill—there were some serious flaws in the bill that were revealed during the course of committee hearings, and it is commendable that amendments were made to the bill which attempted to address those flaws, and I'm going to speak to those. The problem is, we agree that there were flaws; we disagree that the amendments offered up adequately address some of those flaws—very major flaws.

We also can't talk about Bill 159 without making reference, of course, to the Shand coroner's jury recommendations. I will concede that a significant number of the recommendations are reflected in the bill; make no mistake about it. But let's understand what really is being said, because right from the beginning, Shand indicates that there haven't been any amendments to the historic—well, it's not true. There have been amendments, but there hasn't been any major reform of the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act since 1966.

Then the Shand jury recommendation makes what I think is the most critical observation: "The current act was passed in 1966. The world and the security industry have changed dramatically since that time," very much so. It goes on: "In 1966 most security practitioners were watchmen; today they provide a wide variety of services with significant interaction with the public, especially in shopping malls, hospitals, entertainment venues and other locales."

I think that's critical, and it's something that some of us on the committee referred to. We referred to that split, that schism, over and over again because, quite right, in 1966 parapolicing by private security was virtually unknown and indeed would have been, I put to you, perceived in the Canadian context with some repugnance by the public, seeing non-police officers acting in an active and aggressive police manner. It just didn't happen.

That's what is important to note. The Shand jury recommendations are all about the new phenomenon of what I call, and others have called, parapolicing: private police forces—historically, nothing new. If you take a look back, there was Pinkerton's protecting Rockefeller and shooting miners who dared to put up a picket line around a Rockefeller mine site. The origins of policing in North America are private policing, and of course a major breakthrough was the development of public police forces. So there's no quarrel with the observation that the nature of security work has changed dramatically. But that's the whole point. The Shand jury recommendations are all about regulating and controlling this new type of parapolicing.



Look, I've got a problem right off the bat, in that this bill creates a structure wherein private policing can only grow. Now, some making presentations at the committee said, with great candour, "Look, you can't have the best of all worlds. There simply aren't going to be adequate resources and public policing to perform all of the policing function in our society." I appreciate in that complex number of ways, whether it's internal security in industry or in business or the proverbial floor walker in, I don't know, a retail store, a Sears or an Eaton's—we don't have Eaton's any more. A Kmart—we don't have Kmart any more—a Zellers, perhaps.

I'll tell you one of my concerns about the bill—we invited the government to address this issue in committee. One of my great concerns about the bill—because there is much in this bill that does what I think a bill of this type should do. There are 31,000 licensed security guards in Ontario right now; however, there are many thousands more who aren't licensed because they fall outside the scope of the existing legislation, the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act. Let's cut to the chase here: Just as Shand acknowledged, a big chunk of these people—we don't know the number—perform that passive security role of watchman, watchperson, whether it's the person who sits at the screen in your condo building or your apartment building and monitors various cameras that are located throughout the parking garage and in the hallways and keeps an eye out for fire alarms or entry alarms, or the student who is hired in the summertime to sit in a lawn chair outside a small contractor's construction site of four or five houses that he's building. If it's a big developer, he's probably going to have a security firm, but if it's a small builder like the kind of folks who build houses down where I come from—most of the province is like that—you hire a university kid to sit in a lawn chair for eight hours, and you tell him, "If anything untoward happens, don't be a fool and go out and try to make some kind of citizen's arrest. Just use your cellphone to call the police."

That watchperson wasn't the sort of role that Shand was interested in or concerned about, was it? That's the classic, à la 1966 night watchman kind of security guard. Why are we embracing that very passive security guard/watchperson role when even Shand was clear in indicating that that's not what Shand was addressing? Shand said that we're addressing the new type of security guard, the parapolicing, the proactive, the person who has to—not "has to," but his job description includes perhaps arresting people or asking people to leave the premises.

2040

The kid on the small building site—I don't know how they do it where you come from, but where I live if you leave a couple of skids of two-by-fours out there overnight, there are going to be some missing in the morning. The shrinkage is just a fact of life. We've got a lot of pickup trucks down where I come from. The shrinkage is a part of life, so you hire a university kid or even a senior high school kid to sit there in a lawn chair. Some of you might have done it in your own youth. Your instructions

were, "Look, the mere fact that you're here is going to deter people from pulling up in the pickup truck and loading up the bags of Portland. If indeed somebody should get aggressive with you, use your cell phone. Call the police, for Pete's sake." End of story.

Similarly, people working in condos and apartment buildings and commercial-retail business complexes whose sole job is to sit—remember the old school of doing the rounds with the keys? Do you remember that, Speaker? Technology has made that obsolete. All that was was a way of making sure the security personnel did the rounds. There's nothing magical about turning the key. But you don't have to do that any more because you're sitting in front of a console. Your boss doesn't expect you to run out and tackle the gang tunnelling into—whatever—the storage room of the condo complex. Call the police.

I was shocked to learn during the course of these committee hearings that security staff in places like the Eaton Centre are doing drug busts. We're not talking about big wages here. This is probably one of the crappiest wage jobs in Ontario right now. As a matter of fact, they're deplorable, embarrassing wages. I don't know if others on the committee—of course you'll remember Mr. James Caron. I was just so impressed with his participation in the hearing—a straightforward guy. He's done a lot of extracurricular work on his own initiative, taking various community college courses, perhaps some private programs. He's making the minimum wage. He's got to pay for his own uniform. He's got to pay for his own licence.

For the life of me, I don't know why we're calling upon security staff making crappy wages to do drug busts when (1) it presents a danger to themselves, in my view, because of the nature of the people who deal drugs in places like the Eaton Centre, I presume; and (2) a security guard could as readily bust an undercover police officer as anybody else, and that would be a genuine detriment to the role of the police in investigating drug trafficking in big public places like the Eaton Centre, or whatever it's called at the moment.

I'm concerned that submissions were made to the committee about the need to set standards, the continuum-of-force guidelines. I'm concerned that there were discussions about certain levels of training so that private police could be equipped with batons, clubs—the only reason you carry a club is to hit people with it—that there was a proposal that there's a type of expandable baton, a flick baton, that opens with a snap-like action, that these firms wanted their personnel to carry handcuffs.

We raised, in this Legislature, many years ago, concerns about adequacy of public policing in business improvement areas. The BIA along the auto dealer strip in St. Catharines, for instance, felt compelled to hire private police because there weren't enough resources in the Niagara Regional Police Service to protect the cars from vandalism and theft of wheels and theft of hubcaps and things like that. You go down to the United States, where you find gated communities—and if you go to the

right places in Toronto and other parts of Ontario, you find them here. I don't get to those neighbourhoods often. I don't get to these upscale houses. Look, these are the BMW-Mercedes-Benz-caviar-Porsche-William Ashley-Waterford-crystal places. These are the Waterford folks. Every time I see one of those million-and-a-half-dollar houses, it just proves to me that there are still people not paying enough income tax. But these gated communities have private police.

Part of an observer's response could be, "If they can afford it, God bless." But think about this: They can afford to pay for private police so that their little enclave can be safe from foreigners while police resources are being starved in other parts of our communities so that people in those neighbourhoods become increasingly vulnerable to crime.

I was actually struck by the relatively benign attitude of the Police Association of Ontario toward the bill, toward the concept, and the Ontario Provincial Police Association. I'll tell you this: I know that when firefighters were confronted with legislation that would regulate or potentially institutionalize private firefighting, they raised all get-out. They fought like the devil against any legislative structure that would embrace, regulate, legitimize, institutionalize and advance private firefighting services. Again, don't say they don't exist, because there are places in the United States where they very much do exist. If you haven't signed up and paid your fee and your house is on fire, it's too bad, so sad. That truck just keeps going. You're on your own.

I believe in public policing. I believe that we should invest adequately in our police services, our police forces, in the police officers working in those police services—and look, we hold our cops to incredibly high standards, as we should, because policing means precisely what the advocates for the parapolicing forces in this bill imply: It means interfering with people's liberties. It means taking hold of them; it means seizing them; it means restricting them; it means taking them into custody; it means subduing them.

I take great comfort in the fact that police in our province, in our country, are held to incredibly high standards, because I know that when those police engage in their duty, they're going to utilize those standards and the safety of the person is going to be protected as best can be and the liberty of the person is going to be interfered with as little as possible in the course of that police officer doing what he or she has got to do.

I have a very fundamental problem with a bill that institutionalizes, that regulates, that will undoubtedly nurture and foster the growth of private parapolicing in the province of Ontario.

2050

I don't quarrel with the presence of security teams and personnel, both in terms of active security work as well as in security planning and building systems in workplaces. Quite frankly, the demands on an industrial security person are enormous and the level of training is very, very specific. It has far less to do with appre-

hending people who are stealing a widget and wrestling them to the ground than it does with the security personnel being trained in occupational health and safety issues and in the variety of toxic things—chemicals, amongst others—that are in workplaces, being able to detect these and handle them in an appropriate way, and being able to respond to emergencies and spills and fires and the like in an industrial workplace. I've got no quarrel.

I found myself in a peculiar and rare alliance with banks during the course of these committee hearings.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Tell me it's not true.

**Mr. Kormos:** It was momentary, Mr. Bradley, and it was purely an intellectual exercise. It wasn't an embrace based on passion; it was purely an intellectual exercise, wherein I agreed that banks should be able to design security systems to protect the integrity of their systems. If corporations like Nortel had had them, guys like John Roth couldn't have stolen so much money from so many Canadians and from so many Nortel shareholders, as he did before he retired with his mega-golden-parachute handshake. Talk about people who should be in jail. He should be sharing a cell with Conrad Black. Heck, there isn't an outlaw biker gang in the province of the country that's stolen more money from more people in as short a time as that guy did from his powerful executive position at Nortel. Conrad Black, by the way—talk about companies that needed better security systems.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Lord Black.

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes, my lord Black. Yes, well, Lord Black—Tubby—is going to be lining up for some conjugal visits, I'm afraid, with Babs in that wait-your-turn, your-time's-coming—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** You must have been saddened by Radler's downfall.

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes. Conrad Black—unbelievable. These guys steal like bandits, they lie like rugs and they prance around spending other people's money, not having earned a penny of it themselves, and then somehow they cry big crocodile tears when they get caught. As I say, Conrad Black—keep some cells available for him in any number of jurisdictions. Barbara can read her Martha Stewart magazines while she's doing her time, I suppose.

I want people to know that Mr. Bradley's here. It's 8:55 p.m. Mr. Bradley, from St. Catharines, was here at 8:30 a.m. I had wandered into the chamber to get some stuff out of my desk, and Mr. Bradley was sitting at his. Nobody else was here, but he was here at 8:30, and he's still here at 8:55 p.m. For a person who is the most senior member of his caucus, and the most senior member of this chamber, to continue to devote so much time to this chamber is truly remarkable. His folks should know that Mr. Bradley's been here for a good 12 hours easy. His folks appreciate his remarkable dedication. He, of course, is the government House leader now, and he's the man in the Liberal caucus whom Dalton McGuinty calls when he



needs counsel. He is the senior member of the caucus, and McGuinty is wise to do precisely that.

We had very few actual security firms come forward. I'll tell you, one of the types of security firms, parapolicing, that bothers me most is the anti-scab operations, the union busting gangs. You see them—

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Securicor.

**Mr. Kormos:** Securicor, Mr. Bradley says. There are a few of them around. I've seen them on picket lines escorting scabs through, intimidating picketers, using oppressive surveillance techniques. These are the very sort of parapolicing security firms that the Shand coroner's jury recommendations are saying have to be regulated. You've seen them. You know the types: the steroided ones with the black jackboots, the black police-style uniforms, the Bubba-style dark sunglasses or mirrored ones, the ones that have got cop-itis. They sound like something off a TV show. Little do they know that real police don't sound like cops on TV shows. These are the ones that are problematic, the ones that drive around in the police-style vehicles with the canine security and who have a clear desire to be police officers, but who unfortunately don't seem to have a whole lot to offer police services across Ontario at this given point in time. That's not to say there's anything wrong with them. Let me put it this way: At the end of the day, if I'm going to be get busted, I'd rather be busted by a public police officer who is trained, who is professional, who is sworn to do his or her duty in an impartial way, who I can count on to collect evidence in a professional manner, and who I can count on to give evidence in a fair and unbiased manner.

I am incredibly concerned about the growth of private parapolice forces. I think the anti-union, the union-busting scab operations, are just despicable. If there were a way to identify them so that they could be isolated, they should be outlawed completely. Quite frankly, if we had anti-scab legislation, they would be out of business anyway, wouldn't they? Their primary function is to escort scabs across picket lines. Those union-busting, jackbooted parapolice, scab-escorting outfits—in my view most security firms don't do that; there are just a very few—would be out of business if anti-scab legislation was restored in this province.

As a matter of fact, I can talk to you about scabs because just a few days ago, on October 12, I was down with the Mitech workers at the Mitech factory on Major Street in Welland. These were members of Steelworkers Local 1132, 10 of them. Ten women and men have been on the picket line for four weeks now, with their scab-escorting boss, the owner of Mitech, refusing during the course of those four weeks to sit down at the bargaining table.

I'll tell you what the issue is. Mitech is contemplating a move of its physical location. They manufacture plastics—it's a dangerous job, a toxic job, a tedious job—for the automotive industry. The wage range at Mitech for workers with 10 and 15 years'-plus service is \$12 and \$12.50 an hour. A whole lot of new Canadians: They're

not new any more, but they were new when they started working at Mitech 10 and 15 years ago. It's \$12 and \$12.50 an hour, and you know what? They're raising families on that kind of income. And you know what? Their strike isn't about pay. It's about the fact that their current contract has a 10-kilometre scope on it in that Mitech is required to keep these employees if they stay within 10 kilometres of their present location. I talked to workers at a factory in Woodbridge today whose contract has a 250-kilometre scope. Their dispute is the owner of Mitech's refusal to negotiate an expansion of that 10-kilometre radius, knowing full well that if he moves 10.5 kilometres away from where he is, these unionized workers will all be gone and he can hire non-union workers and pay them even less than \$12.50 an hour. Scabs are crossing the picket line to continue to manufacture. You know what? These people have never been on a strike before in their lives. Women and men, each—not each of them, but many of them with the distinctive accent reflecting their own ethnic origin, their own national origin, their own linguistic origin, hard-working people. I can't believe that they don't bear more ill will toward the owner of Mitech.

**2100**

I said to them what I've had occasion to say to so many workers in so many places: that it's never, ever, ever wrong to fight to keep jobs in your community. Because you know what? My colleague from St. Catharines knows this as well: When you're losing manufacturing jobs like we are down in the Golden Horseshoe, in the Niagara region, through into Stoney Creek, Hamilton, and you lose your crummy job at Mitech for \$12.50 an hour, it's nine months on EI, unemployment insurance, and then probably the rest of a lifetime on welfare. That's how quickly it happens. That's how quickly it happens. If we had anti-scab legislation the scabs wouldn't be crossing the Mitech picket line, and that strike would have been resolved a long time ago.

Bill 159: We've got 31,000 licensed security guards currently in the province of Ontario. We encouraged the government, we pleaded with the government to develop in committee a reasonable grandparenting element in the bill. It was my fear—and again, we didn't have any hard data. All we know is that there are 131,000-plus security guards registered, but just using my real-life experience, like anybody else in this room, I figure that as many as half of those people, as many as 15,000-plus workers, could lose their jobs overnight once Bill 159 becomes law. Let's be candid here. We're not talking about the graduates of the community college law and security programs, the people who are working in the parapolicing activities, the people who are working in white-collar security in the banking system and in the insurance industry etc. We're talking about people working for minimum wage because this is the last job that they were able to find and the last job they'll probably ever be able to get.

How can we sit here and condemn as many as 15,000 hard-working women and men to a lifetime of welfare?

That's what it will mean. I appreciate that the government spokespeople on the committee talk about creative ways of testing them. Come on. These are people who, maybe their reading and writing isn't quite as good as their kids' is, because maybe they didn't have the same opportunities as the kids did. Quite frankly, if they had, they wouldn't be acting as security guards for minimum wage, would they, as night watchmen? If they had university degrees, they wouldn't be working at those jobs for a lifetime, would they?

I don't want to in any way, shape or form denigrate these folks. But heck, you and I both know there's a certain point in everybody's life where the prospect of being tested again is just so daunting. The anxiety alone will make it impossible for these people to adequately perform tests.

So our proposition was easy, our proposition was simple, our proposition was clear, because we had assurances from the government—and I have no reason to disbelieve them, especially in the way they organize their regulations—that there would be multiple tiers of licences. There could be any number of a variety of licences. And we agree there should be a licence for people to do parapolicing in those gated neighbourhoods; there should be a different licence for people who do industrial security, because the needs are very different. Shand didn't concern itself with the night watchman. Shand was very specific about saying, "No. It's not the night watchman that we're concerned about. We're concerned about this new type of security guarding."

So I say this: Why wouldn't the government have grandparented existing licences as that lowest level of night watchman licence? Would that have been so hard to do? Because if these people have been licensed in doing their watchman jobs—I say "watchman" when I should be saying "watchperson," but "watchperson" sounds so cumbersome. Besides, Shand said "watchman." But if they've been working at that desk in the condominium or in the apartment building or, quite frankly, at the entryway to the Seaway Mall in Welland, where the security guard is there as much to tell people which hallway you take to get to Woolworths and which one you take to get to somebody else as anything else—they've been capable of doing that for five years, 10 years. Why do we have to submit them to the indignity of testing, when maybe their literacy skills aren't quite what yours and mine are? Why do we deny them the opportunity to continue doing what they've been doing for five, 10 or 15 years by way of grandparenting existing security guard licences as that minimum level of passive watchperson/watchman licensing, which is basically nothing more than a registration and a security clearance?

These people don't have to know about how to arrest people; these people don't have to know about how to subdue people; these people don't have to know about the continuum of force. Look, you've spoken to these women and men. They don't want to apply force to anybody. Among other things, they say, "I don't get paid enough to bust some hoodlum who is smoking a joint in the foyer of the mall," or something.

I don't know. All I know is that six months down the road, when somebody walks up to one of my colleagues, like Mr. Hampton up in Kenora, and says, "Mr. Hampton, I didn't pass the test that they said I had to take if I was going to continue watching that warehouse eight hours a night, and now I don't have any job at all. Why did you pass that bill?" I want Mr. Hampton to at least be able to say, "My friend, we weren't prepared to support a bill that didn't grandparent you." When somebody walks up to Gilles Bisson, my colleague up in Timmins—James Bay, and says, "I don't know, Gilles. I've been doing this for 12 years, and now they said I had to take a test, and you know I just can't do it. I only have grade eight, and even that was a struggle. Why did you let a bill pass that took my job away?" I want Gilles Bisson to be able to say, "The New Democrats didn't support that bill for that very reason."

We could still fix it in committee, along with my opposition colleagues who voted against this bill being referred back to the House. You said it wasn't ready. When it was brought back before the House, we voted against it being brought back before the House for the very same reason. Look, nobody disputes the need to regulate, and regulate effectively, the parapolicing security firms, the new style of security that the Shand coroner's jury recommendations make specific reference to. But I want to draw your attention to a couple of other things: how the bill—and again, I don't criticize the drafters of the bill. They just follow orders. They follow instructions. Because at the end of the day it's the politicians whose names are attached to the bill who have to take responsibility for it.

2110

Why are we including bouncers, chucker-outers, as the Oxford English Dictionary speaks of them? Why are we including them in a scheme to regulate security guards? Back many, many years ago I recall being a college and university student, and a whole lot of college and university students worked in taverns, students pubs, as bouncers. And look, there are bouncers and then there are bouncers. Being a bouncer didn't mean kicking the crap out of drunks. It meant steering them to the taxicab when they had clearly had too much. It meant reminding them, "Excuse me, sir. I'm afraid you're mistaken. That isn't your girlfriend," or similar interventionist roles.

What are we doing? Why are we trying to regulate and force young people—it's primarily young people—who work as a means of financing their education or as a favour to the club or organization that's taken over the student pub that night to raise money for Red Cross or Katrina or what have you, and who gets paid 50 bucks or 30 bucks or 40 bucks, I don't know, for doing it—why are we telling that young man, or woman for that matter, that we want them to be tested and licensed and regulated, and we want them to pay a fee for that licence when, please, just use your common sense and use your experience through the course of your lifetimes. If you have a problem with bouncers—oh, nuts. I forgot the name of that rock club.



**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Is it Club 54?

**Mr. Kormos:** No, no, no—but they had big bouncers. I mean, part of the entertainment was watching—because they really eighty-sixed the drunks. I mean, it was—boom, right out of the movies, you know? These were big—boom—you know, biker types.

But the fact is that we have criminal laws, and bouncers are subject to the Criminal Code. There are a few in Toronto who have been charged over the course of the years and have learned it that way. We also have civil litigation. Why aren't we letting the criminal law and civil litigation—I'm talking about the liability of a tavern owner because of the liability he or she has for the conduct of their bouncer if it is one of the big brutes. Why aren't we letting civil litigation and the criminal law regulate those particular bouncers? Why are we drawing them into the same scope as para-policing?

Again, you know my view: I don't agree with para-policing. But I take to heart the admonition that was made many times during the course of the committee hearings that it's a reality. I wish it weren't. But it being a reality, I agree that it has to be regulated, and that's what Shand was addressing. It was addressing that new style of security guard, para-policing. Shand didn't ever contemplate bouncers. What in the name of all get-out is some 19-year-old kid, earning some extra money while he or she is going to school at Ryerson as a bouncer a couple of times a week—why is this government telling that kid that they've got to write a test, be licensed and pay fees? Somehow, there was this obsession with bouncers. Maybe somebody, somewhere, deep in the bowels of some bureaucracy, had an unpleasant experience with a bouncer some night. My advice to that person is, when you drink that much, go home of your own volition before you start tangling it up with the bouncer.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** It was at the the Golden Pheasant Tavern.

**Mr. Kormos:** In St. Catharines.

Take a look at some of the, again, oversights that continue to flaw this bill. The Private Investigators and Security Guards Act was not all that deficient. There were no private investigators who came forward, or private investigation firms. Either they don't exist, private investigators, or they had no interest in the bill. But to be fair, the bill did little to alter the regulatory regime but for the prospect of imposing training. And again, I know nothing about the private investigation industry. As you know, back in the days before no-fault divorce, it consisted of some guy with a 35-millimetre camera and a flash unit at one of those cheap motels down on the Lakeshore strip. But I found it remarkable that no private investigators or private investigation firms came forward. They appeared, to the extent that they functioned, not to have much interest in the legislation or in the prospect of regulation, and that is, I presume, understandable.

We paid a whole lot of attention to subsection (7) of section 2. That was the exemption: "This act does not apply to...." As a matter of fact, Ms. Sandals may recall

this. I'm sure she does. Ms. Sandals, on behalf of the government, brought an amendment because insurance adjusters were exempted. They do private investigation work. But then the government amended it to say "and their employees," and that's fair enough. The bill excluded barristers and solicitors engaged in the practice of their profession, but the government did not amend it to read "and their employees," as it did insurance adjusters. If you take a look at the historic Private Investigators and Security Guards Act, it did not apply to barristers and solicitors in the practice of their profession or their employees.

You know what that means? That means that a para-legal working for a lawyer can't do that basic investigation work, doesn't it? Because while you specifically excluded the employees of insurance adjusters—in other words, you gave to the employee of the adjuster the same sort of inherent powers and role as the adjuster—you didn't do it with barristers and solicitors. I'm not saying that there's any ill motive. I'm saying it's just another regrettable oversight because of the, in my view, haste with which the bill was put through the committee process, amongst other things.

There was a remarkable amendment offered up on October 3, 2005, when the committee met for the final time to do clause-by-clause consideration. That was—correct me if I'm wrong, and there will be people here eager to do that—not a response to anything that the committee heard, because what subsection (2) of section 9 did was to add this prohibition:

"(2) No person who holds a licence to act as ... [an] investigator ... shall act or hold himself ... as being available to act with respect to,

"(a) locating a person known or suspected ... to be a member of a witness protection program; or

"(b) gathering information about any person known or suspected ... to be a member of a witness protection program for the purpose of enabling" the witness, the person being protected, "to be located."

**2120**

I gave my head a shake when I saw the amendment, because only a couple of weeks earlier at a press conference, I was sitting in the audience when the government's Attorney General and the chief of police were doing a joint press conference, and there was some reference to the witness protection program. When the press gallery asked about what that witness protection program consisted of—because, you see, it's not like that movie. What's that movie—Goodfellas? Remember that movie? A good movie. The guy goes into the witness protection program, right? But the government representative, the spokesperson, the Attorney General, had a hard time identifying exactly what it was that took place in the Ontario witness protection program. There were some mumbblings about, "Well, you know, we give witnesses counselling and we give them support during the course of the trial." Now, I know that there is a federal witness protection program where people are given new identities etc. Insofar as I've been able to

determine, Ontario's witness protection program on a good day consists of a bus ticket to Kingston and a \$50 voucher for Wal-Mart. We're not talking about a particularly sophisticated exercise.

But the concern that I had was this: If the government has to enact a law prohibiting an investigator from looking for people in a witness protection program, that rings bells; it raises the alarm for me about how good our witness protection program is. Because you and I both know that what we're talking about is the sort of thing that a whole lot of teenage kids can do with a laptop computer. So I've got some real problems. I invite the government at some point to have a candid discussion about Ontario's witness protection program. If it is so frail, if it is so fragile, if it is so vulnerable, if it is so readily penetrated that we have to pass a law prohibiting private investigators from identifying people in witness protection programs, then we haven't got much of a witness protection program, have we? And if there is a real concern about people in witness protection programs being discovered, you'd think there would be a broader statutory prohibition against anybody seeking out people who are in witness protection programs.

I finally got it. This section, 9(2), will be added to the list of things that the Liberals did to make Ontario a safer place. It will be added to the list of, "We now require gunshot wounds to be reported by hospitals," even though there wasn't a single example given of a hospital not reporting a gunshot wound. Remember that, Mr. Dunlop. And you understand that the legislation that requires the reporting of gunshot wounds doesn't create any penalty for not reporting them, so it's an obligation without a consequence, which means it's not much of an obligation at all. Having said that, there wasn't a single instance cited to us of a gunshot wound not being reported once that person with the hole in him or her showed up at the hospital. And added to that is the observation that this government has made people safe from vicious pit bulls, but for the fact that not a single pit bull has been taken off the streets of any city or town or village in any part of the province of Ontario by the Attorney General's legislation.

Added to that, they're going to say, "Yes, and we made it illegal for private investigators to track down people in witness protection programs," when Ontario simply doesn't have much of a witness protection program. So what the government did was cynically exploit this bill to try to generate more fluff, more spam for its spin around law and order and making a safer province.

The member from Simcoe North very generously quoted from Liberal campaign propaganda from the last provincial election. He made reference to the Liberal promise to hire 100 new parole and probation officers to help protect the public. Hire 100 new probation and parole officers? The government is selling the farm; the government is shutting down Ontario's probation and parole office and handing over, relinquishing, responsibility and control to the feds. Oh, great. "Ottawa has got a stellar record," Kormos sarcastically said, "when it comes to parole and early releases from federal institu-

tions. Oh, I feel so much safer now," voice dripping with sarcasm.

The Liberal promise was to add more prosecutors—huge courtroom backlogs that delay and sometimes deny justice. But what did the Attorney General have to say about his plan to get rid of the backlog? He's going to suspend the rules of evidence. The Attorney General tells the press that no longer is an accused person going to be able to look his accuser in the eye and cross-examine him or her, face to face, during the course of trial, and some whacko proposition about permitting audiotape evidence. The poor accused trying to defend himself or herself will be looking at a speaker on a little Wollensak tape recorder trying to say that, "Judge, he's not telling the truth."

That's the Liberal solution to backlogs in our court, to suspend the rules of evidence, to eliminate the right of an accused person to a full answer and defence? That's pretty slim pickings, and it's pretty sad stuff. The commentary was, "Oh, well; it'll only be a Highway Traffic Act offence." A Highway Traffic Act conviction can have some pretty serious consequences: You can lose your licence and lose your job. Now we've got to pay higher insurance premiums. It's just head-shaking time when you hear an Attorney General start with a ban on pit bulls and close with a proposal to suspend the laws of evidence. Shame on this Liberal government.

New Democrats don't quarrel with so much that's in the bill. We wish it had spent more time in committee. We wish dearly that the government had a clear focus on what the Shand coroner's jury inquest recommendations were all about. We insist that this type of legislation, this bill, has to protect the jobs of de facto security guards at the very least by grandparenting them at the minimum level, at the basic level of watchman licence. That means there will be a decade transition period—15 years at the most. But think about it: If those working security guards have done their job, kept their job, performed their duties, kept their licences for the last five, 10 or 15 years, do we really have to tell them that their future depends upon a roll of the dice and a test you may or may not be able to pass, not because you can't do your job as a security guard but because you're just not that good at performing during tests?

The inclusion of bouncers is just silly. This government has created a new bureaucracy and embraced problems that don't exist instead of focusing limited resources on the real problems. So while there's much in this bill to laud, and we have been long-time advocates of regulation, for instance, controlling the type of uniforms that private police wear—except the existing legislation already permits that. You see, the Private Investigators and Security Guards Act, the one that goes back to 1966, says:

"The minister responsible for the administration of this act may,

"(a) specify the uniforms, badges, shields and insignia to be worn or used by security guards."

We didn't need Bill 159, Mr. Jackson.

**Mr. Jackson:** I agree.



**Mr. Kormos:** The minister was sitting on his hands.

**Mr. Jackson:** The coalition-NDP government moved it.

**Mr. Kormos:** Nineteen sixty-six, Mr. Jackson; that's when that bill dates to. The minister already had the power.

I tell you that it's with regret that we won't support legislation that puts good Ontarians' jobs, their liveli-

hoods, at risk. We wish it were otherwise, and we welcome an opportunity to work with this government to create grandparenting to protect those people, some of them incredibly vulnerable.

**The Acting Speaker:** It now being 9:30 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow, Tuesday, October 18.

*The House adjourned at 2130.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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## CONTENTS

**Monday 17 October 2005**

### THIRD READING

**Private Security and Investigative  
Services Act, 2005, Bill 159,**

*Mr. Kwinter*

Mr. Kwinter.....	77
Mrs. Sandals.....	78, 81
Mr. Wilson .....	80
Mr. Kormos.....	80, 90, 92
Mr. Fonseca.....	80
Mr. Yakabuski.....	81
Mr. Dunlop.....	81, 92
Mr. Leal.....	91
Mr. Jackson .....	91
Mr. Ramal .....	91
Debate adjourned .....	99

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Lundi 17 octobre 2005**

### TROISIÈME LECTURE

**Loi de 2005 sur les services privés de  
sécurité et d'enquête, projet de loi 159,**

*M. Kwinter*

Débat ajourné .....	99
---------------------	----





No. 5A

N° 5A

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Tuesday 18 October 2005

Mardi 18 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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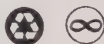
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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 18 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 18 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### EARTHQUAKE IN SOUTH ASIA

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I rise to remind honourable members and citizens of Ontario that we have an obligation and a moral responsibility to ensure that the plight of the people of Pakistan, Afghanistan, India and the epicentre of the earthquake in Kashmir are not forgotten. As time passes and this tragedy slips from the front pages of our newspapers, the urgency to provide support and aid to the relief efforts may well be lost. We cannot allow that to happen. In fact, the death toll, now at 48,000, continues to climb, the injured number more than 60,000 and a staggering four million are homeless.

Among those demonstrating leadership in organizing relief efforts are community leaders such as Markham Councillor Khalid Usman, who, together with the International Development and Relief Foundation, hosted a very successful fundraising event in Rexdale this past Sunday in which I had the honour to participate. John Tory, the leader of the Ontario PC Party, attended a similar event, organized by the Islamic Foundation of Toronto, in Scarborough. And we both had the opportunity to participate in a radio appeal on the Radio 770 AM program Sazo Awaz, hosted by Arif Muzzffer, sponsored by Mr. Shahid Hashmi and supported by community leaders like Mr. Aftab Rizvi and Dr. Shanaz Dar.

I once again call on Premier McGuinty to respond to John Tory's appeal to the government of Ontario to increase its support beyond the \$1 million initially committed and to announce a matching private donations program.

#### GOLDEN HORSESHOE MARATHON

**Ms. Judy Marsales (Hamilton West):** I rise in the House today to express my sincere respect and admiration for the six wheelchair athletes who took part in the 2005 Golden Horseshoe Marathon. This past September, Charlie Cetinski, Harvey Uppal, Les McLaughlin, Duc Giang, Kevin Duchane and Chuck Mealing demonstrated an enormous amount of will, determination and athletic ability as they wheeled a total

of 242 kilometres from Niagara Falls to our front door here at Queen's Park.

On day three of this incredible event, the athletes made their way to the front entrance of the McMaster University Medical Centre, where I was happy to greet them and welcome them to Hamilton West. These athletes demonstrated an incredible amount of strength and resilience as they tested their own endurance and physical ability while raising funds that go toward stem cell research that can benefit spinal cord injuries and other neurological diseases.

The Golden Horseshoe Marathon was conceived by Charlie Cetinski in 1999 as a fundraiser for various organizations such as McMaster University research and innovation, the Canadian Paraplegic Association and the Hamilton resource centre.

Dr. Michael Rathbone, who was also present to meet these wonderful athletes, has been working with a team of researchers at McMaster University and is very close to a major breakthrough in stem cell research. The proceeds from this fundraiser will encourage the continued development of McMaster's leadership in innovation and research of this major project with global benefit.

I'd like to offer my congratulations to the participants and organizers of the Golden Horseshoe Marathon from all of us in Hamilton West and here at Queen's Park. You are truly an inspiration to all of us.

#### JENNIFER TEAGUE

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean—Carleton):** Today I rise on a very serious and sombre note to pay tribute to a young woman from my riding of Nepean—Carleton. Last month, Jennifer Teague, an 18-year-old student at Elizabeth Wyn Wood Secondary alternative program, tragically went missing from suburban south Nepean. Residents were saddened to learn some days later that her body was found not far from her home.

Jennifer was a beautiful young woman, a talented athlete. Her life was taken in her prime; she had a very bright future. She is survived by her older brothers Carey and Kevin and her parents Ed and Jean Teague.

Throughout this entire tragedy the Ottawa Police Service and Chief Vince Bevan have worked diligently throughout the search and now on the criminal investigation. I'd like to publicly acknowledge their dedication and hard work.

Today the Jennifer Teague Memorial Golf Tournament is taking place to raise funds for victims of vio-

lence. I'd like to congratulate everyone who is working on this event to make it a success.

This tragedy has also had a terrible effect on our entire community. In a sense, it's a loss of the community's innocence. A culture of fear now pervades much of the community. Young women are afraid to walk the streets at night and parents are worried about the security of their children.

A key concern of the community is the number of uniformed police officers on the streets of south Nepean. We therefore welcome the government's announcement of 1,000 new police officers and hope they will look favourably on Ottawa's request for 90 officers—Ottawa being the second-largest city in the province. Let's move on this community concern in an expeditious manner.

#### KAWARTHA CHOICE FARMLAND FOODS

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** Once again I have the pleasure of speaking to this House about Kawartha Choice Farmland Foods, a local Peterborough-Kawartha initiative that has been running now for almost two years. On Monday, September 26, 2005, in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce annual meeting, the Kawartha Choice Farmland Foods initiative, in competition with communities all across this great country of ours, took home the gold in the National Award for Leadership project. The award was presented to Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce chair Bill Casey and general manager Stuart Harrison. Well done, guys.

As a matter of fact, two awards were presented: a gold, silver and bronze award from the judging committee and a people's choice award from the convention delegates. Peterborough won first place in both categories.

Kawartha Choice is a local initiative designed to provide marketing and branding material and concepts to local agricultural producers and the companies that sell their products. Marketing materials are available from local butchers, grocery stores and restaurants to help identify their products for consumers. From beef to buffalo, honey to maple syrup or apples to sweet corn, the Kawartha Choice logo is your assurance of the quality and integrity of locally grown products.

The Web site, kawarthachoice.com, is a main source of information and marketing material. It contains lists of producers who sell at the farm gate, at area farm markets and at special events.

I'm delighted by the success of this local Peterborough-Kawartha agricultural initiative. The folks at the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce have taken a local idea and brought it to this great nation. This is another exciting development in the short history of the Kawartha Choice Farmland Foods initiative and is a testimony to the entrepreneurial and imaginative spirit of the residents of Peterborough.

#### ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** Today I'm very pleased to welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. The association is currently headed by Chief Armand La Barge of the York Regional Police Service. Our leader, John Tory, and myself met this morning for over an hour with Chief La Barge and about 30 other chiefs, representing police services from a wide variety of communities across our province.

Clearly they are an organization extremely frustrated with the lack of action from the McGuinty government. As an example, today the association announced the formation of a blue ribbon justice reform committee. They will be working together with police, government and community leaders to seek solutions to issues that hinder the efficiency and effectiveness of our criminal justice system.

There are numerous issues facing our police leaders, including the growth in criminal areas such as gang violence, gun violence, crystal meth and other illegal drug operations, child pornography and Internet luring, lack of police resources and of course the potential cuts of up to \$300 million from the justice ministries.

On behalf of all Ontarians, I thank the OACP for their continued commitment to making Ontario a safer place to live in spite of a government that does not consider community safety a top priority. I would like to have everybody in the House give a warm round of applause to the folks who are here, and particularly to my chief of police in the Midland Police Service, the former president of the OACP, Paul Hamelin, and his group of friends.

1340

#### SUPPORT FOR SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This government has had lots of lofty talk about its commitment to the South Asian community, but when it really counts, unfortunately and sadly, the McGuinty Liberals are nowhere to be found.

South Asians in Hamilton and region were victims of a devastating hate crime on September 15, 2001, which the McGuinty government still has done nothing to rectify. In a vicious assault against community members, the Hindu Samaj Temple was set ablaze by arsonists. It was a blatant act of post-September 11 racist backlash.

The incident remains a stain on Ontario's reputation as a place where diversity is celebrated and supported. No perpetrators were caught and brought to justice. The community was left to rebuild its temple and cultural centre from the ashes, without a shred of support from the Ontario government.

Just as they had the first time, community members reached into their own pockets to restore this important landmark, but even with a sizable bank loan, the



insurance settlement and massive donations, the need for government involvement in a cultural project has never been clearer. We should help ease the damage of the desecration and send significant signals that racism will not be tolerated and its victims will not be abandoned.

We have an opportunity to turn a negative into a positive. Surely there is room in the government's funding envelope for helping to complete the Hindu Samaj Temple restoration and erase a provincial and national shame. I would like to believe that just once the McGuinty government would do more than just say the words and instead show real, tangible financial support for innocent people victimized by a massive hate crime here in Ontario.

### SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** Yesterday, I had the opportunity to visit the breakfast and basketball program at a school in my Thornhill riding. With parents going off to work, some children are not able to get adequate attention and nutrition in the morning. The breakfast and basketball program makes sure that these children are well fed and ready for the day's challenges in the classroom. Playing basketball with a former NBA player is also a special privilege these children get to enjoy. Being active, healthy, happy and nourished are not options for the children of Ontario; they are necessities.

The breakfast and basketball program began four years ago and has grown ever since. In the past, the program received private funding and the government provided gift cards from major Canadian retailers. Last week they were pleased to receive the first instalment of funds from the student nutrition program. The school is one of 36 schools in York region that will receive almost \$114,000 from the McGuinty government to go toward revamping student nutrition programs. The community-based nutrition programs across the province will affect over 250,000 students and are part of our government's current investment of \$8.5 million.

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services should be thanked for providing assistance to this program. Special thanks to Oksana Majaski, who volunteers so much of her time to make this program work, and former NBA player Mitch Wiggins for the leadership and inspiration he provides to the children.

### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**Mr. Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East):** Just a few weeks ago, along with the Premier and many of our caucus colleagues, I had the opportunity to attend a celebration of research and innovation at GlaxoSmithKline's facilities in the beautiful city of Mississauga. This celebration was an event to mark GlaxoSmithKline's \$23-million expansion of its Mississauga facilities. This announcement will mean approximately 75 new jobs for the people of Mississauga and Ontario. This huge invest-

ment is great news for the city of Mississauga and my constituents.

It's also an excellent example of the fruits of investing in research and innovation. Investments like this one will help ensure that Ontario will be at the forefront of the innovation race, which in turn will mean more jobs and a stronger economy here in Ontario. While private sector investment in research and technology is incredibly important, our government is also working hard to ensure that Ontario is a leader in research, development and innovation.

The first step was Premier McGuinty's creation of the new Ministry of Research and Innovation.

The second step came just last week. Our government returned to the House with a clear, focused plan for the province of Ontario. One of the key components of that new plan is this government's goal to boost Ontario's competitive advantage by increasing investment in research and development while endeavouring to forge a culture of innovation amongst our citizens.

Everyone knows that there are few prizes for those who finish second in the field of research. With our government's continued investment, we are giving our people the tools they need to survive and succeed on the cutting edge, and we're paving the way for a very bright future for all Ontarians.

### WOMEN MOVING FORWARD INITIATIVE

**Mr. Mario Sergio (York West):** It is with great satisfaction and pride that I congratulate the hard-working visionaries in my community of York West, leaders such as Tonika Morgan, who spearheaded the Women Moving Forward project in the Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre. Just recently, the Women Moving Forward initiative received over \$1.2 million from the Trillium Foundation. These funds will go a long way in assisting the most vulnerable women in my riding with intense basic training in life skills, career planning and better community participation over a span of five years.

Tonika Morgan says that receiving this funding means that we are steps closer to breaking the cycle for those most vulnerable women. Programs such as these are important in helping women gain the confidence and experience necessary to confront and successfully navigate change in their lives and the lives of their families.

I also applaud the great strides that the McGuinty government continues to make for the young and vulnerable women in Ontario. Last week, the Premier and the Minister of Education, the Honourable Gerard Kennedy, in an effort to offer more choices to our students, announced a new alternative high school diploma at Westview secondary school.

The McGuinty government believes it is so important to the wealth of our province that we continue to ensure that the promising future of vulnerable women is not overlooked. Congratulations once again to the Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre and the Women Moving

Forward project for their inspiration and their relentless hard work.

Pursuant to standing order 84, this bill stands referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT LA LOI PORTANT RÉFORME DU DROIT DE L'ENFANCE

Mr. Craitor moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 8, An Act to amend the Children's Law Reform Act / Projet de loi 8, Loi modifiant la Loi portant réforme du droit de l'enfance.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Kim Craitor (Niagara Falls):** Yes, I do, Mr. Speaker; very brief.

Shortly after my election as the provincial member of Parliament for the riding of Niagara Falls, I was approached by a number of grandparents who asked me in the last session of the assembly to introduce a bill designed to allow caring, concerned grandparents to have legal access to their grandchildren, where it is in the best interests of the child. Since then, I've received over 2,000 e-mails, letters and personal contacts from loving grandparents who find themselves in this difficult situation.

I'm pleased to introduce a bill that would give recognition to the rights of grandparents, where, in the opinion of the courts, this would be in the best interests of the child. My proposed legislation, if passed, will amend the Children's Law Reform Act to emphasize the importance of children's relationship with their grandparents.

### UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE ACT, 2005

Mr. Fonseca moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr13, An Act respecting The University of St. Michael's College.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Pursuant to standing order 84, this bill stands referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

### PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE OF MEDIAEVAL STUDIES ACT, 2005

Mr. Fonseca moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr21, An Act to incorporate the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 18, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has moved that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 18, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1352 to 1357.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Amott, Ted	Gerretsen, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Arthurs, Wayne	Hardeman, Ernie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Baird, John R.	Jackson, Cameron	Racco, Mario G.
Barrett, Toby	Klees, Frank	Rinaldi, Lou
Bartolucci, Rick	Kular, Kuldeep	Runciman, Robert W.
Bentley, Christopher	Kwinter, Monte	Ruprecht, Tony
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Leal, Jeff	Scott, Laurie
Cansfield, Donna H.	Levac, Dave	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	Marsales, Judy	Smith, Monique
Chambers, Mary Anne V.	McMeekin, Ted	Smitherman, George
Cordiano, Joseph	McNeely, Phil	Takhar, Harinder S.
Craitor, Kim	Meilleur, Madeleine	Tascona, Joseph N.
Crozier, Bruce	Miller, Norm	Tory, John
Delaney, Bob	Mitchell, Carol	Watson, Jim
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Wilson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	O'Toole, John	Wong, Tony C.
Duncan, Dwight	Peters, Steve	Yakabuski, John
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Peterson, Tim	
Fonseca, Peter	Phillips, Gerry	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Murdoch, Bill
Churley, Marilyn	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael
Horwath, Andrea	Martel, Shelley	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 58; the nays are 8.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.



## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### STROKE CARE SYSTEM

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with you and with all the members of this House more good news about the Ontario government's stroke strategy.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Yes, I agree.

Hear this: Since taking office two years ago, we have been working hard to complete a province-wide stroke care system, a system that emphasizes prevention, offers quicker treatment and benefits all Ontarians regardless of where they may live. I'm delighted to report that we have now put in place the final pieces for a fully functioning regional stroke care system.

Ontario's integrated stroke care system has three distinct elements: regional stroke centres that provide leadership and ensure that stroke rehabilitation services are applied consistently throughout the region; the next level consists of district stroke centres providing acute stroke care, local leadership and service integration; and, finally, stroke prevention clinics, which, as their name suggests, provide stroke prevention services to people at high risk of stroke and those who have had a small stroke.

Earlier today, I was delighted to announce that Huntsville District Memorial Hospital is the latest hospital to be designated as a district stroke centre, bringing the province-wide total to 18. I'm sure the honourable member for Parry Sound-Muskoka, as well as the people of that area, will join us in celebrating this development, as I can attest that he just did.

But there's more good news. Today, I also had the opportunity to announce that five more hospitals have been designated stroke prevention clinics: Bluewater Health in Sarnia, Brantford General Hospital, St. Joseph's Healthcare in Hamilton, Hawkesbury and District General Hospital, and Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie. We now have 24 stroke prevention clinics throughout Ontario providing services like diagnosis, case management, clinical interventions and assistance with lifestyle changes. Thanks to the system we now have in place, patients in every region of Ontario can receive rapid diagnosis and treatment, as well as improved follow-up care within the community.

When dealing with strokes, one thing we know is that a quick response is absolutely critical, and we now have that capacity. As a result of this regional stroke care system, lives are being saved and the lives of those who have been affected by strokes are being improved.

The system we now have in place is working. Here are some stats: 63% of stroke cases today are referred to a stroke clinic, compared to only 9% in 1997-98. The time it takes for patients needing life-saving, clot-busting

drugs to receive treatment has decreased 35% since 2000. The in-hospital stroke mortality rate has declined from 17.2% in 1997-98 to 15.9% today. That means people are living longer.

The time, effort and money we have invested in our stroke strategy is well spent, because the fact remains that stroke statistics are daunting. Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Ontario and the leading cause of disability in our country. It's also the leading cause of admission of the elderly into our long-term-care homes.

Here in Ontario, 16,000 people per year suffer stroke and 90,000 of our fellow Ontarians are living with the effects of a stroke. Clearly, faced with an aging population, we're also facing a dramatic increase in the number of strokes. So we're working hard to rise to this challenge.

Thanks to the success of Ontario's stroke care system, this province is seen as a leader in the field. In the United States, the National Institutes of Health use Ontario's three-tiered approach to acute stroke care as a model for developing American priorities for future stroke care.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure and pride to join with all members to celebrate the progress that has been made, and to compliment those health care professionals staffing the front line of health care for the great work they're doing.

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** I am pleased to stand in my place to tell this House about the important steps our government is taking to support small business in Ontario.

When the McGuinty government took office, we decided we needed to provide the kind of vibrant business environment that encourages success and prosperity. We wanted to support the entrepreneurial spirit that drives the economy across this province. We knew if we did this, Ontarians would prosper as a result.

Small business is critical to our economy. Ninety-nine per cent of Ontario businesses are small and medium-sized. More than half of all Ontarians work in small and medium-sized firms, and this year, according to a CIBC study, more small businesses will be created in Ontario than in any other province in the country.

So the facts support our strategy, and we are moving forward in our commitment to this crucial segment of our economy. We have established the new Small Business Agency of Ontario—a direct link between small business and government, where small business interests are included in our decision-making process. This team of highly qualified members, from eight government ministries and the business community, will champion the concerns of small business within government. By having eight ministries represented, we have ensured that small businesses from all sectors will be heard, and we will listen very carefully.

Earlier this month, we unveiled the agency's new on-line regulatory registry to support small business. The registry provides information in plain language on proposed and approved regulations that affect business people directly every single day. As a result of this tool, business people will gain a better understanding and greater involvement in designing better business regulations that reduce their regulatory burden. As a result, they will be able to concentrate on what they do best: being successful, productive and innovative. That means more jobs and prosperity for all Ontarians.

This October, we are celebrating Small Business Month. We want to recognize the outstanding contributions to our prosperity that small business entrepreneurs make every single day. It's also an opportunity to inform entrepreneurs about all the programs our government has designed to help them succeed. The McGuinty government is celebrating the spirit of Ontario's 340,000 entrepreneurs, and we want to support their goals and ambitions every step of the way.

We want all our entrepreneurs to feel proud to be an Ontario small business. I urge everyone in this House and everywhere across the province to support small business in their communities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** Small Business Week in Ontario: Family businesses across this province are the backbone of Ontario's economy. Small businesses that have fewer than 49 employees in a business: there are more than 42,000 of these companies in Ontario. They are the economic engine of this province. In order to succeed and do well, they need a low-tax jurisdiction with a minimum of red tape and laws that create a level playing field. Your government is failing small business in all these areas.

In the spring of 2004, your budget raised small business taxes by 38% by cancelling a tax cut aimed at small businesses—a broken promise. You hiked hydro rates from 4.3 cents to 5.5 cents. Virtually all small businesses use well over the 1,000 kilowatts per month. This was a 28% increase to small businesses, and this was another broken promise. There will be more increases in hydro rates to come next year. You raised business property taxes by lifting the hard cap on business property tax, something you said you would not do—yet another broken promise. You raised the minimum wage from \$6.85 to \$7.15, going to \$8.00 by 2007, a 17% increase on small businesses. You allowed the WSIB premiums to continue to increase while this board operates under a cloud of accusations of mismanagement.

Your government is failing the small business community of Ontario. It is obvious from the litany of broken promises that you don't have a plan to either manage this economy or support small businesses. Perhaps the best we can expect is for you to go down to the cafeteria, get yourself some serviettes and start all over again with a new plan.

1410

### STROKE CARE SYSTEM

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** I'm pleased to respond to the announcement made today by the Minister of Health. He—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. I need to be able to hear the member from Kitchener-Waterloo. I would ask all members to restrain from helping her any more than you already have. Thank you.

**Mrs. Witmer:** As I say, this heart and stroke strategy was actually undertaken in 1999 by our government with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. At that time, we invested \$70 million. We added another \$30 million. I know the minister knows that. We actually designated and funded the nine regional stroke centres, as well as some of the district stroke centres. We also announced the Ontario heart health program in 1998 and provided funding for the prevention of strokes.

I'm pleased to say that as a result of that initiative, there were gains made. For example, our stroke strategy in cardiac care policies resulted in 60% more cardiac procedures taking place since 1995, and we were able to reduce wait times for cardiac procedures by 53% from 1995 to 2002.

I guess I thought the announcement that the minister might be making today was related to a commitment he made in this House on October 13, last Thursday, where he said, "I can tell you that this coming Monday we will be launching our wait times Web site, a Web site that will empower Ontarians by providing them with accurate and timely information about wait times." I went on the Web site just a few minutes ago, and the last time the Web site was updated was May of this year. It looks like another broken promise.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** In response to the statement made by the Minister of Health, New Democrats want to commend the members of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario for the leadership role the foundation played in creating the model for the Ontario stroke strategy. They did that over many months of deliberation. We know there were many health care providers and health care professionals who used their expertise involving stroke and stroke care and who have been instrumental in ensuring that stroke patients will be able to get the health care they deserve, as soon as they need it and as close to home as possible. So we want to thank them for the work they did in developing this strategy.

Briefly to the second point, we know there are other health care providers and health care professionals who have gone to this government in a similar fashion, asking the government to establish the conditions that would enhance quality health care for the patients that they care for too. In this regard, the one example I want to use today references the Arthritis Society of Ontario, which itself has gone to the government and encouraged and



asked and said that they would work with the government to develop an arthritis strategy in the province of Ontario.

In its most recent publication dated September 2005, which all members received, the society published what they call a Checkup on Arthritis. It was a look at all provincial jurisdictions with respect to the policies, programs and the funding that each was dedicating to arthritis. The Arthritis Society made it very clear that Ontario doesn't have a strategy for arthritis, that only British Columbia recognizes arthritis as a priority and has developed a strategy to manage that chronic condition as a result.

In Ontario, chronic diseases like arthritis are treated or dealt with from a pan-chronic disease approach, not from a specific disease strategy and maintenance approach. At a time when there are about 1.6 million Ontarians who stated they had arthritis in 2001, and when we know that number will have risen to 2.8 million Ontarians who have arthritis by next year, 2006, it seems that Ontario must move to develop a strategy as well for arthritis management. This is, after all, the second most prevalent chronic condition in Ontario.

That strategy would include three things: joint replacement for end-stage arthritis, early diagnosis and treatment for inflammatory arthritis and, thirdly, chronic disease management. The society has given to all of us on more than one occasion all of the other recommendations in their 12-point plan to support those components.

Today I encourage the minister and his staff to work with representatives from the Arthritis Society of Ontario, who, like those who developed the strategy for stroke, are very interested in having in place a strategy that would provide the best possible health care for their patients too.

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This is in response to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Certainly we should all be waving our flag for Small Business Month because we know that our small business employers are an integral part of our economy here in Ontario, responsible for thousands of jobs. But then what we need to do is examine the irony of having this government proclaim this month when it's doing so much to hurt our small businesses, like the mom-and-pop enterprises that fuel the economic engine of this province.

The price of hydro is the number one issue that concerns employers large and small in Ontario. The high price of gasoline has further ignited their anger. The mess of the property tax assessment system, a regressive system that desperately needs attention, is another area where small business owners see the McGuinty Liberals falling down on the job. New businesses are reeling from the fact that under CVA they now pay more in taxes each year than they do in rent. How are start-up small businesses supposed to succeed with the McGuinty Liberals throwing roadblocks at them at every turn?

The minister says Ontario will have more small businesses created than in any other province. But how many of those small businesses are going to be able to survive in this environment? Minister, take off your blindfold. In the manufacturing base, 42,000 skilled jobs were lost and tens of thousands more are likely to go. That's truly going to cause suffering here in Ontario.

All those employees you have thrown out of work don't have the incomes now to support the small business community. Their consumer dollars aren't rippling through the economy any more. If there's one thing small businesses need, it's a steady supply of customers. Your policies have robbed small businesses of significant consumer spending power that they need to create more jobs, hire more people, and expand and flourish.

You have ripped away the basic tenets that small businesses need to really get ahead: affordable, reliable public hydro; stable and reasonable fuel prices; a fair, transparent and workable property assessment system; and funding support for municipalities to enable them to do more in the way of community economic development initiatives.

Your promise of "no new taxes" quickly went out the window, along with all your other promises, once you became the government. So don't stand here today and make any more hollow promises. If you really want to help small businesses, make a commitment to fix the problems that you've created that confront them every day. Actions speak much louder than a ceremonial proclamation once a year.

### PERSONS DAY

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties to speak for up to five minutes to recognize international Persons Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent for each party to make statements for up to five minutes with regard to international Persons Day. Is it agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** Women's History Month provides an important opportunity to reflect upon the significant contributions of women to the history and growth of Ontario, to celebrate those who have stood for women's rights, who paved the way to equality, who helped build a strong and free nation.

The theme of this year's Women's History Month is Women and War: Contributions and Consequences. Today, we in this House are privileged to have almost 30 women who have made an immense contribution to Ontario. They are our military heroines, and they are seated today in our Speaker's gallery. Welcome to the House.

This is a tremendous day because this is the first time we've had such a collection of women here in the House,

with us in the Legislature. You are indeed welcome, and I hope it's not your last.

1420

This year, the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, has been declared Year of the Veteran in gratitude for the enormous debt we owe to men and women who served. On behalf of all Ontarians, our government thanks all veterans for the freedom, peace and democracy that we enjoy today.

When we think of veterans, the picture we often form is one of a male soldier lying in a muddy trench, storming a beach or marching home in victory. During Women's History Month, we want to refocus that picture. We are refocusing so that we can celebrate the contributions that women made to the war effort both at home and abroad.

It's a picture that provides an example for the next generation of women so that they too can be leaders in their community. It's a picture of a woman soldier flying a fighter plane, driving a tank, inspecting her troops. It is a picture of women veterans who are with us today. It is the picture of Una Golding walking into the recruiting office in Brandon, Manitoba, five days after her 18th birthday. It's the story of the members of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service who have joined us here today, the picture of Vera Peel as a young woman who enlisted in the army because she felt it was her duty. These women volunteered to serve their country by maintaining anti-submarine equipment and aircraft as well as playing a vital role in communications and signalling. They, along with all women who served both home and abroad, performed crucial roles as full and equal partners in the support of Canada's war effort.

All of the veterans here with us today made a difference then and they continue to make a difference now. Our government is privileged to help share this history. We want to ensure that we educate young people about the experiences and contributions of the women who are with us today. We want to ensure that our young people see the image of Vera Morgan being taken to a secret training location on her first day in the army. We want to see that our young people study the portrait of Helen Hughes embarking on a five-mile march during the first morning of basic training in Kitchener.

Earlier this year, we announced our support of the Dominion Institute's Memory Project road show through the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat. Veterans working with the Memory Project road show continue to bring their stories to light and build an interactive and permanent legacy of our veterans' heroism and valour. I know that Jim Bradley, the minister responsible for seniors, shares with me a determination to ensure that the stories of our vets are preserved and passed on to future generations. Thank you, Minister. A great thanks to our minister responsible for seniors.

October 18 provides us with a moment to reflect on another milestone in women's history. It was on this day in 1929 that women were first legally recognized as persons in Canada, and thank God for that. The "persons"

case was a milestone in women's history, allowing them for the first time all the privileges and rights enjoyed by men under the Constitution.

The contribution of women during the Second World War was a milestone that had just as strong an impact on our history. The women veterans seated in the gallery here today propelled an unstoppable movement of women along the path to equality. They ushered in an era leading to full participation of women in all aspects of economic, social and cultural life, and in building the strong, vibrant, inclusive communities of Ontario today.

This Women's History Month, we look back upon this legacy. We reflect on their contributions and celebrate the military women who follow in their footsteps, women such as Lieutenant Colonel Susan Beharriell, who is with us in the gallery today. This woman joined the Canadian Forces in 1973 and was a member of the first platoon of women to complete the same basic officers' training as men. We are thrilled that she is with us here today. Maybe we could ask her to stand. She is presently on the national security studies staff of the Canadian Forces College here in Toronto.

I ask all members of the House today to join me in recognizing these tremendous women who are part of our history and a part of Ontario's and Canada's future.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** Today, I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus in recognition of Persons Day. As has been said, today marks the 76th anniversary of the British Privy Council's ruling that women were indeed persons under Canadian law.

We owe this historical landmark ruling to five outstanding and determined women who took their fight to the highest court in Canada at the time, the Privy Council in England. It was Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards who made up the Famous Five who were responsible for this decisive victory in the fight for equality of Canadian women. They won the right for women to sit in the Senate, thus opening the door for potential political opportunity to any woman who would take the challenge.

So today is Persons Day. It is a highlight in this month of celebration. This year's theme is Women and War: Contributions and Consequences. I am pleased to join my colleagues in this House in congratulating the women who are here today. It is wonderful to have this opportunity to celebrate the many and countless contributions that women have made in the war effort, both here at home and abroad. These women have served and continue to serve as full and equal partners in the war effort. In fact, it is these women who have been role models for many other women to follow. It is these women who have been the pioneers and who have laid the foundation for women to enjoy success in many other areas of life in Canada.

We have seen women increase their influence and continue to excel in non-traditional roles, just as the war effort was a non-traditional role. We see women today increasing their influence and excelling in business, the



arts, politics and sports. Women have made great strides forward, just as these women in the gallery have. Women have served as justices in the Supreme Court, they have run for Premier of this province, as Lyn McLeod did, and they have served as Prime Minister of Canada, as Kim Campbell did.

Today women have more economic power and access to a wider range of jobs and opportunities than ever before. More are pursuing post-secondary education. More are the successful owners of small businesses. Today we salute all women who are working hard toward independence and self-sufficiency.

Today it is a special privilege that we have to honour and recognize these heroic women who served in war and peace. Congratulations to you all.

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I too, on behalf of New Democrats, would like to welcome—although I can't see them; they're way back there—the female veterans who are here today and to congratulate them, thank them and honour them for their contribution, which quite frequently gets lost in the shuffle when we honour veterans. When I go to the Legions in my riding of Toronto-Danforth, and in Beaches-East York, I spend a lot of time with the female veterans who come on a regular basis to those places.

I must say that I'm really happy to be here today, standing as a full person—aren't you all happy that I'm here today as a full person?—because of the work of these women who are with us here today and because of the work of these five women we are honouring. I'm honoured to pay tribute to the 76th anniversary of the “persons” case and the Famous Five who won this landmark ruling for all Canadian women. They challenged and defeated the status quo, and we all know from this place that challenging and defeating the status quo can take years and a lot of hard work. What they saw happen was women moving from secondary citizens, which kept them from entering the arena of political decision-making and all kinds of other things, into this sphere. We've got to remember, as we stand here, that women not only were not allowed to run for office, they were not allowed to vote.

1430

I would say to all the young people and the young men sitting here today, can you imagine a time in your life when you would be considered a non-person? It was just 76 years ago that girls and women in this country were not considered persons. That's pretty incredible. That's within my mother's lifetime and, I'm sure, for the young people here today, within some of your grandmothers' lifetimes.

This past year, I held Ontario's greatest women contest, and I want to thank all members from all parties who participated in that. I must say it was so well-received that I've been encouraged to make it an annual event and, if you will, also a Canada's greatest women event. How do we even begin to choose between those five women we're honouring today, let alone the veterans who are with us today and so many great women who have

contributed to this country for so many years, some of whom we haven't even heard about? There are women who came up on the list of women on my Web site from all over the province, some of whom I didn't know a whole lot about. I am honoured to have started that process, because that's really what it's all about: educating ourselves and young people about the history and the incredible contributions of women in this province and indeed in this country.

Their challenge 76 years ago to the interpretation of the term “persons” opened the door for women to take their rightful place in Parliament and all aspects of public life. I want to underscore here that they did it working individually and collectively, again a testimony to the strength women have when we work together. Occasions like this today remind us of this important lesson that we women in recent years sometimes tended to overlook.

I want to pay tribute for just a moment to LEAF, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund. They will be having their annual breakfast—I believe they first started in 1985—on Wednesday, November 2, at 7:30 in the morning. But once we get there, we all wake up and have a wonderful time honouring the women who contributed so much to our country and to these values. I invite all people—not just women, but everybody—to attend the breakfast on November 2. As you know, LEAF was established through the court system, through the legal system, to continue to fight for equality and equity for women. They are doing a tremendous job in furthering that agenda, and they need our support.

I want to end by leaving a quote with you that you're all familiar with: “Never retreat, never explain, never apologize; just get the thing done and let them howl.”

**Interjection:** Who said that?

**Ms. Churley:** That's my motto, and you remember who said that.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### PAROLE SYSTEM

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, do you support in principle the idea that a criminal who is sentenced to life in prison for second-degree murder and sexual assault should be given a day parole pass to Canada's Wonderland?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** The leader of the official opposition has addressed a question to me that has nothing to do with the provincial jurisdiction. If someone has been given a life sentence for murder, he would be in a federal institution. He would be subject to a federal parole board. It has nothing really to do with me, and I can't answer for them.

**Mr. Tory:** It's too bad the minister doesn't have an opinion, but that's fine. We'll go on to the next part here. You've indicated, Minister, that your government intends to bring forward legislation this fall to transfer Ontario's parole responsibilities to the federal parole board, the same parole board that issues day passes to Canada's Wonderland to a man convicted of second-degree and sexual assault. Canada's Wonderland was also an option for that same board for another person sentenced to 14 years for robbery with a gun, as well as a criminal given a three-year jail term for sexual assault and drug trafficking.

Minister, why do you want to back away from your responsibility and your government's responsibility for community safety and hand parole in Ontario over to this federal bunch who think it's OK to send convicted criminals to Canada's Wonderland by the busload? Why would you do that?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** First of all, it would be, I think, prudent for you to direct that question to your colleague in Ottawa, Mr. Harper, and have him ask that question there.

Getting back to the idea of the parole board, you should know that we have not made any decision regarding the parole board, but we do have a responsibility to look at how we can provide safe accommodation for the people of Ontario and also to look at whether or not there's duplication. I think the member would like to know that on any given day, we have 56,000 male offenders under community supervision. Of that number, 130 are on parole.

We now have a parole board in Ontario. We're one of only three provinces that have it. We have a federal parole system. I have a responsibility to look at whether or not there are some benefits to merging those two particular facilities. That decision has not been made, but I'd be remiss if I didn't at least examine it.

**Mr. Tory:** Let's look at the facts and maybe decide that it's a good thing that we're one of three provinces that has our own parole board. According to your own ministry, provincial offenders in Ontario are released before the end of their sentence approximately 14% of the time. The National Parole Board grants early releases to approximately 50% of convicted criminals.

Minister, people across the province, and the police chiefs, for example, who are here today, are rightly angry at Ontario's revolving-door justice system. Now you're set to make it even easier by handing this thing over for people to get out of jail early on parole. I think most people in Ontario don't think it should be easier to get out earlier, and so I ask the minister this: Why are you handing Ontario's parole system over to the bunch that brought us revolving-door justice in Ottawa? Why are you doing that?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** The member keeps insisting that we're doing it, and I keep telling him that the decision has not been made. Also, the member will, I'm sure, want to know that in the correctional facilities in Ontario, where offenders are sentenced who are sentenced to two

years less a day, the average length of stay in our facility for a convicted offender is 66 days. The average length of stay for those people who are on remand is 34 days. So when you consider that people are there, on average, 66 days, if they're charged, 34 days if they're on remand, the idea that we are putting the community at risk with any of these people just isn't true.

What we are doing is trying to make sure the community is safe. We will not do anything that will put that in jeopardy. But we still have a responsibility to examine everything that we do in my ministry to see if there are effective ways of doing it.

**Mr. Tory:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we'll get to it another day, but the minister is looking at this the wrong way. They should be there longer than 66 days. That is the point for a lot of these people. They're getting a tap on the wrist.

#### WAIT TIMES

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My next question is for the Minister of Health. Can you explain why the wait time between seeing a specialist and receiving treatment in Ontario—your definition of a wait time—has increased from seven weeks in 2003 to nine weeks today? Why are wait times going up on your watch?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** First off, to the honourable member who has yet to tell Ontarians where he would make his \$240-million cut in health care, I'd be interested in your response to that. I'd also be interested, in your next supplementary, if the honourable member could offer a source for his information.

**Mr. Tory:** I'm happy to: the 15th annual Hospital Waiting Lists in Canada survey, a survey you welcomed this morning. According to that survey, Ontario's wait times are going the wrong way and are increasing since your government took office in 2003. This is despite all of your rhetoric and all of your announcements, and despite the \$900 a head that you're collecting from people on the health tax that you said would reduce wait times.

According to the report, the wait time for hip and knee surgeries in Ontario has increased to 30 weeks, up from 24 weeks in 2004—a 25% increase. Recently, you shut down the only independent Web site, the joint replacement registry, which actually objectively monitored these wait times. Why are you hiding the truth from Ontarians when it comes to the wait times they face, and why are they getting worse on your watch?

1440

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I've appreciated so much the honourable member's clarity in offering that the survey, not scientifically based in any way, that he offers as evidence, was completed—it's important—by none other than his leader—I should say, his former leader, Mike Harris, and the gang at the Fraser Institute.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** It's another Tory story.



**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Yes, it's Tory, Tory, same old story.

What I will offer to the honourable member is that we'll be challenging the \$240-million cut that he has proposed for health care, and accordingly, he should offer that up. Also, to let the honourable member know, he referred to a Web site that's no longer available. There was no such Web site, sir. You should talk to the honourable member beside you. She could tell you that.

More to the point, Ontario soon will have available to all, on their Web site, state-of-the-art research, scientifically based, built on the work of expert panels in Ontario, hundreds and hundreds of doctors who have gotten together and done—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** Well, of course that Web site was promised by the minister for Monday, and I think it's Tuesday today—so yet again, not delivered on time.

Minister, if you compared this report to each of the reports for the last two years, here's the trend that emerges: Hip and knee surgeries have seen—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Tory:** Here's the trend that emerges: Hip and knee surgeries have seen wait times increase by 25% since last year. Medical oncology cancer treatment wait times increased 20% since last year. Patients now have to wait six weeks to receive a CT scan; they had to wait five weeks before. MRI scans now take 11.5 weeks, compared to 10 weeks when you were elected.

Our wait times, Minister, are going the wrong way. You shut down the only independent source that measured wait times, and you say, "Just trust us. Wait times are going to get fixed." My question to the minister is this: When you do come forward with your information, why should people believe you?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The honourable member has offered up, for his era of believability, a dependence upon Mike Harris. I think, in contrast, a lot of people are going to feel like we're off to a much better start.

I still give the honourable member the opportunity to indicate where the first instalment of his \$240-million cut to health care is going to come from; \$240 million is yet unallocated. The reality is this: Only one party in this Legislature and only one government in Canada campaigned on wait times. It was our government. As a result, there is a discussion going on in our country that was fuelled here in Ontario by our party in the last election.

In the time since: MRI access, up by 42%; CTs by more than 8%; hips and knees by 28%. This government, with hundreds of millions of dollars of investment that our Premier leveraged from the federal government, is investing in an eradication of wait time challenges, and soon—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** A question for the Acting Premier: This week, Ontario families are being hit with property tax assessment increases of 20% and 30%—a nasty blow to families already paying more for hydro, more for heating costs and more for gas prices. And what is the Premier's response? "We didn't run on that." Minister, your property tax system is unfair, it's arbitrary and it's hurting people. What is the McGuinty government's plan to fix this unfair situation?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** I'd refer that to the Minister of Finance, who I think has responsibility for this.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of Cabinet):** MPAC has finalized, as we all know, its reassessment for properties across Ontario for the year 2006. I'd remind the member opposite in the first instance that these do not constitute tax increases. There are a number of factors that go into the calculation of taxes that—I have to rethink this answer if Flaherty is nodding in agreement. One has to be cognizant—and perhaps the member is not, although, given his experience in raising taxes in past years—that in fact the assessment values are taken in the context of a mill rate across all of Ontario's municipalities, as is the education levy. I would urge those people in the province who are receiving their assessments and are concerned with them—there are rights of appeal available, and we will continue to monitor the situation.

**Mr. Hampton:** Ontario property taxes are now being set by the roll of a dice. People are being treated unfairly and arbitrarily, and what is the Premier's response? "We didn't run on that." You didn't run on setting a health tax of \$2.5 billion, and you didn't run on driving hydro rates through the roof either, but you've certainly done that, and done it very quickly.

Here is the reality: Property taxpayers across this province are being hurt by an unfair and arbitrary system. You are quick to act on some of these other fronts. Where is your plan to address the unfairness of your property tax system?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** I would remind the member opposite that municipalities do have a number of tools available to them to help mitigate these types of assessment changes. First of all we have a program that provides relief from reassessment related to tax increase to low-income senior and disabled homeowners upon application. We have programs to limit assessment-related tax increases on commercial, industrial and multi-residential properties. There are optional tools available to municipalities as well.

Again I remind the member that these tax increases and these assessment increases are not necessarily tax increases. Municipalities do have tools with which to manage them. It takes the assessed value of the property that will be applied against individual mill rates, and then the tax is calculated. We'll see where that winds up at the end of the tax season, we'll see where municipal mill

rates wind up, and I believe that overall we will see that most municipalities will be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** Well, here's what the Ombudsman said. He describes your property tax system as "Monty Python-like." Here's what one opponent of the Mike Harris property tax system had to say, and I want to quote him: "Minister, when are you going to admit that you've screwed up royally when it comes to property tax reform in Ontario?" Who was that? That was Dalton McGuinty.

Minister, Dalton McGuinty told the people of Ontario to choose change. Why are you now endorsing and supporting the very property tax system that Dalton McGuinty used to say was screwed up and unfair to taxpayers?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** Let me remind the member opposite that our 2004 budget featured a \$125 additional property credit for seniors, which you voted against. You voted against that. As always, the member opposite doesn't give you the whole story.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** What the Premier also said this morning is that we anxiously await the Ombudsman's report as well, and we will welcome its conclusions.

What did your critic say yesterday with respect to the property tax system? Let me quote. He was asked if you had a position on change, and he said it is "in the gestation of looking at some kind of ... policy." He says you'll have a position by 2007; you don't want to share your position too early. This was in the Ottawa Citizen, Saturday, October 15. Put your position on the table. Don't hide behind that. We're standing up for the assessment and for people in Ontario. We challenge you—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Order.

1450

## ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Minister of Energy, but it is interesting to see the Liberal finance minister defend Mike Harris's property tax system.

Minister, yesterday you announced a \$6.5-billion sweetheart deal with Bruce Power for more expensive, unreliable private nuclear power. You broke your promise for a full public debate on nuclear power, and you left out important details from your announcement, like who will cover the cost of overruns and the reductions in the lease payments given to Bruce Power.

You were also silent on something else: what to do with the radioactive waste, which is toxic for thousands of years. Minister, since you had so much to say yesterday, how much new toxic radioactive waste will your deal with Bruce Power generate that has to be looked after in Ontario?

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I'm delighted to be able to say that, although the honourable member has been concerned about the lack of consultation, in fact, through a directive from the Ministry of Energy, the Ontario Power Authority has met with over 175 individuals. They have been in 40 newspapers; they've done public consultations; they've met with Greenpeace; they've met with Energy Probe. The consultation is continuing; they're not over yet. Also, if the member were going through the contracts, he would recognize that \$20 million every year will go toward the nuclear waste.

**Mr. Hampton:** We've learned that when you hold a couple of meetings, for the McGuinty government that constitutes a full open public debate about nuclear power.

My question was: How much more nuclear waste is going to be generated? I didn't hear an answer. We know that storing nuclear waste is dangerous, that it's complicated and that it's also very expensive. Yet the McGuinty government has no idea how much more nuclear waste is going to be generated.

Let me ask you this, Minister: Do you know how much it will cost hydro ratepayers to store the additional nuclear waste that will result from your special deal with Bruce Power? How much more will it cost people on their hydro bill?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** I always find it interesting from the honourable member—he doesn't like nuclear; he doesn't like coal; he doesn't like gas; he doesn't like much of anything. The fascinating part is that while they were in government and had the opportunity to do something about nuclear, instead they cancelled 1,800 megawatts of clean renewable energy and they cancelled every conservation program in the province, and then they contributed to the \$10-billion overrun on Darlington.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister, you can be forgiven because you weren't here then, but if you read the history books, it was the Peterson government—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Stop the clock. Order. I can wait. Leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** It was the Peterson government that took a Darlington plant that was supposed to cost \$4.7 billion and took it to \$15 billion. It was the Liberal energy critic, one Dalton McGuinty, who said you should cancel the Conawapa project.

But I want to ask you this: It's a \$6.5-billion deal when you include the gift of lease reduction payments to Bruce Power and when you include the fact that the ratepayers of Ontario could be stuck with a billion-dollar cost overrun package, and all you get in the end is a fixer-upper.

You promised, Minister, a full public debate on nuclear power. When is the full, open public debate on nuclear power going to happen now that you're already doing a deal which costs too much and, frankly, still doesn't protect the safety of the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** Our obligation is to keep the lights on in Ontario. We have a vision that includes safe,



reliable, clean energy for this province. We know we have to build, we know that we have to refurbish or maximize our existing assets, and we know we have to conserve as well. That is the direction we're going, because we have 25,000 megawatts of new supply: 2,200 in, 9,000 more, another 1,500. We're on our way, with more to come.

### GREENBELT ADVERTISING

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** I have a question for the Acting Premier. The voters of Ontario believed you when your party promised, and I'm quoting from your election platform, that the McGuinty Liberals "will ban self-promotional government advertising." Can you explain why your government is breaking your own promise and spending \$1.5 million of scarce taxpayers' money on a massive advertising campaign to promote your flawed greenbelt plan?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** I should think the minister responsible for the greenbelt wants to answer this.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I know that the Leader of the Opposition has been against the greenbelt from the beginning. When he's with his downtown Toronto environmentalists, he has one point of view, but when he's with people who are opposed to the greenbelt, those who are opposed to environmental change in the province of Ontario, he has another point of view.

As he would know, the Greenbelt Foundation is completely independent. It was set up in a very similar fashion to what your government did when you set up the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. Any decisions that are made by that entity are in fact independent of government. They do not answer to us. So I don't know what the member is talking about when he talks about this being a government program. It is a foundation. He should speak to the foundation if he's dissatisfied.

**Mr. Tory:** It would be a lot easier for you to speak to this independent foundation than for me, because the deputy minister of one of the departments and half the board are appointed by the government of Ontario. The \$25 million in scarce taxpayers' money that you've sent over there seems to have the sole purpose of promoting the greenbelt. Not only are you subverting your own advertising rules by doing it through the back door, this self-promotional advertising, but it's obvious that you've broken another promise.

The ads in question, when you go to the Web site, inform people of such necessary facts as that apples grow on trees and deer are not found in the suburbs. This organization is so awash in the taxpayers' cash, which you obviously have just floating out of your hands like it means nothing, that they can set up an office in a swanky office building in Yorkville and spend money like it's going out of style.

My question is this: How can you possibly defend this kind of gross misuse of the taxpayers' dollars? Will you pull the ads right away, or are you telling us this was just another promise that you're going to break and you're going to try and do it through the back door this time?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I must, when I'm talking to the environmentalists in downtown Toronto, tell them of your great concern, because the environmental community is very supportive of the Greenbelt Foundation. I'm sure that a former minister of the government, Dr. Robert Elgie, who is head of the greenbelt commission, would be an individual who would recognize the importance of the greenbelt.

You know full well that this is independent. You'll remember, I think, that when you set up the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation you had an allocation of funding of several million dollars for that foundation as well. You did not, to your credit, interfere with the manner in which they chose to utilize those funds. I do not intend to stand over top of these individuals and impose upon them any government policy or government recommendations. They are there on behalf of the Greenbelt Foundation to promote it and, of course, to make sure that it's successful. I hope you share my view that it's going to be successful. I don't think so, so far. I think the right wing has gotten to you and not the downtown environmentalists.

1500

### WASTE DISPOSAL

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I have a question to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday, in response to questions about your government's lack of a plan to deal with a possible garbage crisis in the GTA if Michigan suddenly closes its borders, you said, among many other things, "We have an amazing plan." Would you be kind enough to table this amazing plan with us today?

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** I appreciate the question from the member from Toronto-Danforth. She will recall that the quote had to do with our waste diversion plan. I remember being asked that question by the Toronto Star and answering it. That was the context of what I was talking about. I want to share—since you want to know, of course—our amazing waste diversion plan that we have as a government.

In Ontario, each municipality is responsible for identifying its own waste management solutions. That said, we're committed to giving municipalities the tools they need to make responsible waste management decisions. No municipality should assume that disposing of its waste outside of Ontario is an acceptable long-term solution. We must continually strive to reduce, reuse and recycle the waste that each municipality generates.

I might add, you share with me the fact that it's a wonderful week, being Waste Reduction Week here in Ontario. I'm sure you support that.

**Ms. Churley:** Well, parliamentary assistant, I understand that there's nothing to table because there is no amazing plan. That's the plan? There is no toolbox. You haven't done any of the things that you're on your feet talking about today. You're quick to blame the municipalities, yet your own waste diversion discussion paper that you're talking about says "significant upfront capital expenditures and additional resources would be required" etc., and the province should help out, yet not a penny has gone to help those municipalities. When can municipalities like Toronto with aggressive plans for waste diversion—not idle promises like you're giving—expect their cheque?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I say to the honourable member opposite in regard to our plan about waste diversion that the first thing we did as a government was to approve making industry cover half the cost of the blue box. In this province, there were many municipalities committed to the blue box that were in danger of losing this most vital and most apparent commitment of people to the 3Rs because of the loss of the blue box. We wanted to make sure that wouldn't happen, so we approved—that has provided millions of dollars to municipalities from industries so that we can support the blue box. I'm sure the member opposite is in support of the blue box.

We're improving composting standards to encourage the development of more composting programs. We're ordering plans, and we've asked the WDO to help us in reducing what things go into landfills: for example, electronic waste. Yesterday, when I was with two young classes from Alliston, it was exciting to be at the waste reduction kickoff where we had the advantage of seeing the great—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### FAMILY HEALTH TEAMS

**Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls):** My question is to the Minister of Health. I know that one of our government's signature health care initiatives is our family health teams. In April, our government announced the first of 69 family health teams. This was a landmark announcement. I don't have to tell you and members of the House, and in particular the people from my riding, that when I was first elected, for the first three or four months I was inundated with people coming to me because they didn't have a doctor, the most basic need when you're looking for family health care. I know this is a legacy left behind by the previous government, so I'm excited to see our government moving forward to reverse this situation.

In my riding of Niagara Falls there was an excellent application for a family health team submitted by Portage Medical Group. I have thrown my support behind their application. Minister, will this family health team be approved so that it can better serve the care of my constituents in the riding of Niagara Falls?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I'm very pleased to have a chance to

speak just a little bit about our family health team initiative. We have already had 213 applications from Ontario communities. We've launched the first 69 of these family health teams, and they're taking shape at various stages but taking shape well in different parts of the province. Soon we're going to move forward with a subsequent wave of announcements related to family health teams and, next year, in our third wave, complete the commitment we made to Ontarians of building 150 family health teams.

I can't confirm today for the honourable member that the initiative he specifically raises a question about is moving forward, but it is there, being considered among the applications that have come forward with a strong degree of provider involvement and a good degree of support from the community. I hope to be in a position to spread the good news of family health teams to further communities soon.

**Mr. Craiton:** I understand that the family health teams are part of our government's larger plan to deliver a better model of health care, where more care is provided in the community and less pressure is on the hospitals. On this note, I'd like to thank you for the announcement and the increase in funding for our home care.

The community care access centre of Niagara received more than \$308 million in increased funding this year to provide home care to my constituents. This means that more of my constituents can receive care at home, where outcomes are better and it means less pressure on the Niagara health system's hospitals that serve my constituents. Minister, can you tell me and everyone in Ontario how this plan works in the big picture for all of our health care system?

#### *Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** When the member from Timmins—James Bay asks a question about health care, it matters, but when the member from Niagara Falls does, apparently it doesn't and he disparages that member.

I'm very proud of the way our government has moved forward in terms of making investments that recognize the interdependency of various sectors in health care. We inherited a circumstance where the legacy of two parties while in government meant that community-based mental health, as one example, didn't even receive base funding increases for more than a decade, while we obviously know that people in communities needed those services.

Our investments in long-term care, in home care, in community support services and family health teams, as well as building on previous capacity related to community health centres, are all designed, along with our focus on prevention, to provide more resources upstream, to get our health care system in a position where it's better able to support people as close to home as possible and focus more of its time on keeping them well in the first place. Associated with that is the potential for the relief of pressure on hospitals, and our announcement with respect to end-of-life care has contributed more in that regard.



## WASTE DISPOSAL

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Victoria–Brock):** My question is to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday you said, “We have an amazing plan” for dealing with garbage disposal for Toronto and area if the border closes. Just a minute ago you talked about reduce, reuse and recycle. There has to be more to this amazing plan than reduce, reuse and recycle. Could you please share more of the plan with us?

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** I want to say to the member opposite, my friend from Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, congratulations on being appointed the critic for the environment by your leader.

I'd be more than happy to share with all the members about this. I want you to know that from the day this government was formed, we've been telling those municipalities that ship their waste across an international border that this was not a viable, long-term solution. Given the recent events in the US, the minister met with those communities involved and made it clear that they need to develop a viable, long-term solution to deal with their waste.

Further, I can share that this past Friday the Premier asked the ministry to meet with those municipalities again to get a status report, to get an update on the development of their plans, and those meetings will take place. Finally, I want to assure the member that when municipalities submit their final plans, we will review them at the Ministry of the Environment expeditiously to ensure they meet our very high environmental standards.

**Ms. Scott:** More meetings—we need to get the border working.

We checked the Environmental Bill of Rights postings. There's no evidence of your amazing plan. We checked the Ministry of the Environment Web site—no evidence of your amazing plan. We checked in every newspaper. There's no announcement of your amazing plan.

Yesterday the Premier said that “should the hauler be unable to deliver that garbage to the landfill site in question, it has an ensuing responsibility to deliver it to yet another landfill site.” It turns out the Premier was amazingly wrong on this point. According to the chair of the Toronto Works committee, if the border closes, the responsibility rests with you, the government, and the municipalities to find an alternative, not the Michigan landfill site. Where exactly does your amazing plan put the Toronto area garbage, should the border close? Can you say? Is it going to Simcoe, Halton, Peel or London?

1510

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I want you to know that we on this side of the House listen to the mayor of the city of Toronto in regard to what is the status of their contract, and not other people. The mayor has been very clear on this point.

The second thing I want you to know—I recall that in the throne speech, and I know the member was listening intently, we talked about the need to reform the

environmental assessment process. The previous government came up with the idea of going to scoped environmental assessments, and what that did was divert all of these environmental assessments into the courts. That made sure, actually, that it was not clear, that it was not efficient, that it was not transparent. So it's important for us to achieve that, and I look forward to the minister making an announcement shortly about our change in the process of environmental assessment that will make it clear, transparent and efficient.

## ILLEGAL TAXI OPERATORS

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Today, hundreds of city of Toronto cab drivers came to Queen's Park. They have the support not only of the people of the city of Toronto, but of the council of the city of Toronto and the mayor of the city of Toronto, who wrote to you on September 29 stating their opposition to your Bill 169. The city of Toronto has asked you to withdraw that provision dealing with cab drivers. All the taxi drivers want is fairness, but today, when they asked you to come out to see them, you refused to meet with them. What do they have to do to be treated equally with your favoured limousine drivers?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** Let me start by saying that I greatly value the work of the taxi industry. Over the last two years, I have come to appreciate how hard they work, and I also have come to appreciate the issues that they are facing.

Bill 169 deals with scooping. Scooping happens when an illegal taxi driver picks up a passenger in a jurisdiction in which he is not entitled to pick up the passengers.

This is about public safety. It is about attracting tourism to this industry. We on this side of the House are absolutely committed to deal with this issue. Once we deal with this issue, it will deal with the issues of the taxi industry in a fair and equitable manner and will address most of their concerns.

**Mr. Prue:** Mr. Minister, the only thing we agree on is that these are hard-working men and women. They are the eyes and ears of our streets, they have a dangerous job, and they have low pay.

Last year in this House, I asked you about a photo op in the Brampton Sanjiv Savera Weekly in which you and the Premier posed with limo drivers from the airport following a \$200,000 fundraiser and discussions on the issue of scooping. You would not answer my question then; I don't expect you will answer it today. But my question today is, what rationale do you have to continue this reckless policy in the face of opposition from the mayor, from the council, from the taxi industry and from the 2.5 million people of Toronto?

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** Let me start by saying that this is not a partisan issue; this is an issue about public safety. Let me just quote something that was said at the committee when the hearings were happening on Bill 169. It was Karam Punian who said, “I am a New Democrat.

People of our community do not attend only one party's fundraiser. What happened last time was that a few people attended the Liberal fundraiser, a few people attended the Conservative fundraiser, and some people attended the NDP fundraiser. These people are paying to each and every political party, not only one party."

The picture that you showed to me, you didn't even have the guts to say to me what was actually written on it—just pretend about it.

### RENEWABLE FUELS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question. The member for Sault Ste. Marie.

**Mr. David Oraziotti (Sault Ste. Marie):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations on your election to the Chair.

My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, while you were in Prince township today, which is near my riding of Sault Ste. Marie, you broke ground on the new Prince wind farm project. Can you elaborate on how releasing crown land for wind power development will help our government reach its target of generating 5% of 1,350 megawatts of Ontario's total energy capacity from renewable resources by 2007?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. It's getting a bit noisy. The Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I appreciate the question from the member from Sault Ste. Marie. I think, for the enlightenment of the others, it's actually in your riding, and it was a great honour to be there this morning, as it is just north of the city of Sault Ste. Marie.

This is just the beginning for the Ontario government, to develop clean, efficient, renewable energy. I was very proud to be a part of this and proud that the Ministry of Natural Resources could be part of this project and contributing some crown land. Of the 65 or 66 wind turbines, 16 of them are going to be located on crown land. It has a total of about 502 hectares. This is 99 megawatts of power, enough power to light 20,000 homes—power them totally. This is just the beginning. We have great untapped potential in Ontario. This project is a three-year environmental assessment, and it's ready to go.

**Mr. Oraziotti:** Thank you, Minister. With our government's commitment to phase out coal-fired plants in Ontario, renewable energy sources are going to become even more important to ensure that we can meet Ontario's energy needs. What else is your ministry doing to help our government meet its needs and its commitment to renewable energy by 2007?

**Hon. David Ramsay:** This is all part of our crown land wind and water power strategy that we put out there for almost a year now, and this is one of these that is up and running. At the present time, we have three sites that have received testing approval, and 18 are currently being reviewed by MNR staff. I'm also pleased to

announce for the first time today that we've extended the window of applications for crown land sites to March 31, 2006. In addition, MNR has released an Internet-based Ontario wind resource atlas. This is one of the most comprehensive wind energy maps in the world.

However, wind power isn't the only source of renewable energy in our province. MNR is also actively reviewing proposals for water power facilities across Ontario. Just recently, Hydromega Services became the first applicant from the ministry's competitive site release process to be awarded the opportunity to pursue the required approvals to construct and operate a water power facility on the Kapuskasing River.

### ILLEGAL TAXI OPERATORS

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** My question is also to the Minister of Transportation. Minister, as you know, hundreds of very frustrated cab drivers were demonstrating before the Legislature today, and I hope you took the time to listen to their concerns. They're concerned about section 4 of Bill 169. You know that this does not level the playing field between the taxi operators and the airport limousine operators. Minister, in that bill, you fine those hard-working drivers as much as \$20,000 for a violation—unconscionable disrespect for hard-working people.

We put forward an amendment that would help to solve this problem. It was done, Minister, in goodwill. It wouldn't change a word of the bill. All it asks you to do is to not proclaim section 4 of Bill 169 and to deal with it under the Municipal Act. Minister, will you do that out of respect for those hard-working taxi drivers whom you aren't listening to?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** As I said before, this issue is a province-wide issue. This issue is about public safety. It's about dealing with our tourism and so on.

Let me say that I had the opportunity to meet with Ontario's chiefs of police this morning. I spoke with Donna Moody. She is the deputy chief of police for Niagara region, and she was in the House earlier. This is what she told me: She said that this issue has been growing; it is becoming serious. It started with one town, and now it has spread to three municipalities in Niagara region. We need to deal with the issue.

I also want to make very clear that Bill 169 actually applies to the whole province. It's not for Peel only; it's not for Ottawa only; it's not for Toronto only. It makes the playing field even in the whole of Ontario. By doing that, we have made scooping illegal in this province, which means that people who don't have a valid licence will not be able to pick—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary.

1520

**Mr. O'Toole:** Minister, I'm disappointed, along with the cab drivers in Ontario. You're simply miscommunicating the information on the scooping. This isn't



levelling the playing field. This bill enshrines, on your behalf—and I hate to go here, but you have a debt to pay. Some \$200,000 was raised from that event for Dalton McGuinty. I have the citation here, Minister. I'm asking you to do the honourable thing. Simply declare to the House today and to the taxi drivers of this province that you will not give royal assent to section 4 of Bill 169. You know that tomorrow we're debating this bill. John Tory and our government think there are many good things in that bill. You can win here by listening to this party, as well as David Miller, who supports John Tory's position on this.

**The Speaker:** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** I am amazed that the previous government had nine years to deal with this issue, and they didn't do anything about it. Now they are objecting to a real public concern issue that we are addressing in this House. We are taking this issue seriously. We want to ensure that the tourists coming to the province and our cities and travelling are getting into properly licensed cabs. That is why the fine for taxi scooping will rise from \$300 to \$20,000. This issue is about public safety. This issue applies throughout this province, and this government is absolutely committed to making sure that our taxi industry is protected and their concerns are heard.

#### PAROLE SYSTEM

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I have a question to the Minister of Community Safety. Folks across Ontario want to know what you find so compelling about Ottawa's parole system. Is it the generous and early release rate or is it the day trips to amusement parks?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I'm sure the member regrets the fact that he sort of pitched this question that has already been asked, so I'll give him the same answer. We're looking at all ways that we can in our ministry to provide effective, safe services for the people of Ontario. When you consider that on any given day 56,000 offenders are in the community under the Ontario parole and early release program, of those, only 130 are on parole.

There are only three provinces in Canada that have separate parole systems. I have an obligation and a responsibility to take a look at that issue to see whether or not there are efficiencies without in any way compromising public safety. We have not made that decision, but we are certainly looking at that and many other ways that we can provide safe communities for the people of Ontario, but we're also mindful of the fact that we have to get efficiencies.

**Mr. Kormos:** Minister, you know that Ontario's probation and parole officers think it's dangerous to transfer probation and parole responsibility over to the feds. We learned today that Ontario's chiefs of police think it's dangerous to hand probation and parole over to the feds. If you don't want to listen to Ontario's

probation and parole officers, professionals who have served this province well, why won't you at least listen to chiefs of police?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** In fact, I do listen to the chiefs of police. I've met with them already once today, and I'll be meeting with them right after this meeting. But I want to stress to you again, which is really important, that there is confusion when you talk about the federal parole system, which has responsibility for all offenders who have been sentenced to at least two years and up. This is where you get your serious offenders. In Ontario, nobody is in our facilities who has been sentenced to any more than two years less a day. The average length of stay in our facilities is 66 days.

You're trying to portray that one of these offenders, if they get out on parole and they have 66 days in their sentence, is suddenly going to be putting the people of Ontario at risk. Now, I am not in any way demeaning or releasing the idea that there is a need to provide incarceration for those people who have committed a crime. But you have to understand, the people who are in our custody have been sentenced to two years less a day. We are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

#### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL POLICIES

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** My question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and minister responsible for democratic renewal. Minister, I know that you and the Premier are leading our government's campaign to narrow the \$23-billion gap between what Ontarians contribute to the federal government and what they receive in federal spending. I appreciated your coming to North Bay to speak to our municipal representatives—who included the mayor of Chisholm, the mayor of Powassan, city of North Bay representatives and various representatives from our chamber of commerce—about this issue and how it personally affects each resident of Nipissing.

A new report released yesterday by the independent Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity is just the latest of several independent reports with findings that support our campaign to reduce the \$20-billion gap. Could you comment on the institute's findings and how these impact on your campaign?

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** I would like to thank the member from Nipissing for her excellent question. I really enjoyed my visit to her riding on September 30 and was pleased that the North Bay and District Chamber of Commerce and the municipal council were so receptive to our message about the importance of addressing the gap.

Yesterday's report by the institute is yet another third-party report that supports our campaign to narrow the \$23-billion gap. Three separate reports by TD Bank, the Bank of Nova Scotia and CIBC have documented the

existence of the gap and the need to address it, as has the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, all three parties of the Legislature and many others. This report is another interesting analysis of the fiscal gap, and I certainly welcome their support for our campaign, because I'm sure we all agree, Mr. Hampton, that what's good for Ontario is good for Canada.

**Ms. Smith:** Thank you, Minister. We certainly enjoyed hosting you in North Bay and Mattawa.

I know the North Bay city council and our local chamber have indicated their support for the need to narrow the gap and make investments in Ontario that will allow our province to continue to be the economic engine of Canada. I did notice, however, that while the IPAC report recognizes that there is a substantial gap, they used the figure of \$16 billion rather than \$23 billion. Can you explain to the House today the difference between the numbers that IPAC has used and those of your own findings?

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** Thank you, and that's a very good question. Actually, the institute's report agrees that our number is a good number, a good estimate of the overall difference between federal revenues and expenditures in Ontario, but we used two different methodologies. That is why we have two different numbers.

It is important to note that the institute used a narrower set of data than we did in assessing the gap. For example, our \$23-billion gap estimate includes Ontario's contribution to the federal surplus, which is significant, and our province's share of transfers to non-residents through foreign aid and defence spending, which is significant. The institute's report excludes those areas, and that accounts for the difference between the two numbers.

But what's important here is that yet another report, another institute, agrees that there's a fiscal imbalance between Ontario and the federal government. I welcome all members of this House to support this campaign when representing their constituents in this great province.

#### INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** One and a half years ago, I raised the issue of H5N1, avian flu. The then Minister of Agriculture said in Hansard the next day, "I think it is inappropriate for anyone to fearmonger about the situation that's out there." Acting Premier, do you feel that raising the issue of bird flu is fearmongering?

**Hon. Gerry Phillips (Minister of Government Services):** The appropriate person to ask is the Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** I would say to the honourable member, who has identified an issue that is very much in the news, that I do appreciate the opportunity to talk to the House about how our government considers these matters, which are beyond our borders at the present time. The honourable member would know that our Premier established the chief veterinarian for Ontario,

who has the responsibility to ensure that the food safety practices we have in the province are effective, current and up to date.

As a result of media reports about events that are happening in other countries, on other continents, I have asked the chief veterinarian to review the practices we have to ensure that the food safety programs we have in place will in fact continue to ensure that we have a very solid food safety system in Ontario. The chief veterinarian will also bring a report to the chief medical officer of health in Ontario.

1530

**Mr. Barrett:** Acting Premier, you may or may not want to refer this one to the Minister of Agriculture. I have another quote from April 15, 2004: "I think it is very unfortunate that we are fearmongering in this province." This is from your Minister of Agriculture of the day.

Acting Premier, I continue to raise this issue. Number one, is bird flu fearmongering? Does your government have a plan? We're not talking about food safety, by the way. As I asked a year and a half ago, where would the birds be disposed of, if necessary? We know Michigan is not going to take them.

**Hon. Mrs. Dombrowsky:** If I may share with the honourable member, food safety and animal safety are all part of the same program. We have the HACCP program in the province of Ontario, which is the hazard analysis critical control points program, so we know our producers on farms and processors are following safety measures to ensure that food in Ontario is safe. We have the establishment by the Premier of the chief veterinarian. I have asked the chief veterinarian to review all the policies we have in place at the present time and also to set up a regular reporting program with the medical officer of health in Ontario.

We believe we have a strong food safety and health protection program in place. We believe it is important to be vigilant, and that is what we're doing.

#### NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT SUPPLEMENT

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Yesterday was the National Day of Action to End Child Poverty in Canada. Thousands of parents who receive social assistance and ODSP benefits have to give their baby bonus money back to you. Minister, do you think your actions of continuing to take money from the children of recipients of welfare and ODSP is helping to eradicate poverty, or are you merely contributing to it?

**Hon. Sandra Papatello (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for women's issues):** I appreciate the question today, but I have to admit that as the critic in your portfolio I was surprised you were not asking this question yesterday, which was on the day we are celebrating moving away from poverty here in Ontario.



Let me address this issue specifically. The member of the opposition knows that from the moment we became the government, we changed the policy. All increases from the federal government in the national child benefit are being released and left with families. In our first year of government, that was a \$7-million benefit to families. In the second year, it was a \$25-million benefit to families. In addition, I know the member opposite recognizes the collegial approach we are taking to the issues of poverty.

**Mr. Prue:** Madam Minister, the reality is that people on ODSP and welfare are actually worse off today under your government than they were under the government of Mike Harris. You should be ashamed of that. We need to know—we needed to know yesterday, but we ran out of time, unfortunately.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Because it's a low priority for you.

**Mr. Prue:** No, it isn't a low priority. It's the long questions and the long answers you continually gave on this auspicious day to end child poverty.

Will you commit to end the clawback? There was nothing in the throne speech. Will you do it?

**Hon. Ms. Papatello:** I find it strange that you should speak about priorities to me. You are the last on the list on the questions today in the House. If it was that important, I would expect your leader to be asking these questions. For our party, let me tell you, shame on you for suggesting for a moment that our government is anything like our predecessors. The member opposite will know that for the first time in history, our Ontario government is working with our federal colleagues. It has resulted in a housing agreement. It has resulted in a child care agreement. It has resulted in those elements that have everything to do with how working people need to live. And for those who aren't working, for those who are on social assistance, we increased, for the first time in 12 years, in our first budget—in addition, we have brought in landmark and symbolic changes to finally show some dignity for the people who are on our system in Ontario.

We will do more in our next budget and the one after that.

## PETITIONS

### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas recreational trailers kept at parks and campgrounds in Ontario are being assessed by the Municipal Property Assessment Corp. (MPAC) and are subject to property taxes; and

"Whereas owners of these trailers are seasonal and occasional residents who contribute to the local tourism economy without requiring significant municipal services; and

"Whereas the added burden of this taxation will make it impossible for many families of modest income to afford their holiday sites at parks and campgrounds;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the tax not be imposed in 2004" and 2005, "and that no such tax be introduced without consultation with owners of the trailers and trailer parks, municipal governments, businesses, the tourism sector and other stakeholders."

I am pleased to sign this on behalf of my constituents and those hard-working families in Ontario being dealt a serious blow.

### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty, MPP, as leader of the official opposition, made the following commitment: 'I have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city'; and

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and

"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative; and

"Whereas the council of the city of Kawartha Lakes has demanded that the province of Ontario honour the results of the 2003 election as it pertains to the minister's question;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to honour the commitment made by Dalton McGuinty and to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I am in agreement and would sign the petition as well.

### CREDIT VALLEY HOSPITAL

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly from the community in western Mississauga with regard to Credit Valley Hospital, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas, on August 22, 2005, the government of Ontario, through the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal, announced that the Credit Valley Hospital's phase 2 expansion project will proceed, with construction starting in 2007, and remain publicly owned, publicly controlled, publicly funded and publicly accountable; and

"Whereas the new A and H blocks at Credit Valley Hospital will dramatically improve service and care to

the approximately 4,800 babies delivered each year at the Credit Valley Hospital, improving a facility designed to handle 2,700 births annually; and

"Whereas the expanded capacity will expedite the movement of acutely ill admitted emergency patients on to a nursing unit where they will be cared for in a timely and professional manner, decrease wait times for surgical patients requiring in-patient care, and also motivate local donors to support our community's hospital;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Credit Valley Hospital, its staff, patients, donors and community thank the Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Public Infrastructure Renewal for the government of Ontario's solid commitment to the care and well-being of the growing municipalities served by the Credit Valley Hospital in western Mississauga."

I'm very pleased to affix my signature to this petition. I agree with it wholeheartedly, and I'll ask Andrew to carry it for me.

1540

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** I have here a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, signed by a great number of my constituents and by constituents in neighbouring ridings:

"Whereas, without appropriate support, people who have an intellectual disability are often unable to participate effectively in community life and are deprived of the benefits of society enjoyed by other citizens; and

"Whereas quality supports are dependent on the ability to attract and retain qualified workers; and

"Whereas the salaries of workers who provide community-based supports and services are up to 25% less than salaries paid to those doing the same work in government-operated services and other sectors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to address, as a priority, funding to the community agencies in the developmental services sector to address the critical underfunding of staff salaries and ensure that people who have an intellectual disability continue to receive quality supports and services that they require in order to live meaningful lives within their community."

I affix my signature, as I agree with the petition.

#### MACULAR DEGENERATION

**Mr. Kim Craitor (Niagara Falls):** I'm pleased to present this petition to the Legislative Assembly on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls, and thank Ray Wilson, Nicole Taylor, Bernadette Secco and many others for signing it. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas the government of Ontario's health insurance plan covers treatments for one form of macular de-

generation—wet—and there are other forms of macular degeneration—dry—that are not covered;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"There are thousands of Ontarians who suffer from macular degeneration, resulting in the loss of sight if treatment is not pursued. Treatment cost for this disease is astronomical" for most individuals "and adds a financial burden to their lives. Their only alternative is loss of sight. We believe the government of Ontario should cover the treatment for all forms of macular degeneration through the Ontario health insurance program."

I'm pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I present a petition on behalf of thousands of parents who were promised by Dalton McGuinty that if he became Premier, he would extend funding for autism to children beyond the age of six. The petition reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas children with autism who have reached the age of six years are no longer being discharged from their preschool autism program; and

"Whereas these children should be getting the best special education possible in the form of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) within the school system; and

"Whereas there are approximately 700 preschool children with autism across Ontario who are required to wait indefinitely for placement in the program, and there are also countless school-age children that are not receiving the support they require in the school system; and

"Whereas this situation has an impact on the families, extended families and friends of all of these children; and

"Whereas, as stated on the Web site for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 'IBI can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Its objective is to decrease the frequency of challenging behaviours, build social skills and promote language development';

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fund the treatment of IBI for all preschool children awaiting services. We also petition the Legislature of Ontario to fund an education program in the form of ABA in the school system."

I affix my signature to the petition.

#### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I'm very proud to be able to put forward this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and



"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I present this petition on behalf of all those people who signed it.

#### REGIONAL CENTRES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** This petition that I'm going to read into the record is signed by Christine and Dieter Bressel of Markham, Ontario. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty and his Liberal government were elected based on their promise to rebuild public services in Ontario;

"Whereas the Minister of Community and Social Services has announced plans to close Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, many of whom have multiple diagnoses and severe problems that cannot be met in the community;

"Whereas closing Huronia Regional Centre will have a devastating impact on residents with developmental disabilities, their families, the developmental services sector and the economies of the local communities; and

"Whereas Ontario could use the professional staff and facilities of Huronia Regional Centre to extend specialized services, support and professional training to many more clients who live in the community, in partnership with families and community agencies;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government to keep Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, open, and to transform them into 'centres of excellence' to provide specialized services and support to Ontarians with developmental needs, no matter where they live."

I'm pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

#### FALLSVIEW CASINO

**Mr. Kim Craitor (Niagara Falls):** I'm pleased to present this petition to the House on behalf of my riding of Niagara Falls.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Falls Management Group made numerous commitments to the city of Niagara Falls when it was awarded the Fallsview Casino contract in 1998" by the previous government;

The residents of Niagara Falls state the following:

"Niagara Falls residents are still waiting for the on-site amenities and the off-site attractors" promised. "We believe that the government of Ontario should ensure that all promises made at the time of the awarding of the

contract" by the previous government "be fulfilled" to the residents of Niagara Falls.

I'm pleased to affix my signature to this petition and submit it.

#### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty, MPP, as leader of the official opposition, made the following commitment: 'I have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city'; and

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government, with an upper tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and

"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative; and

"Whereas the council of the city of Kawartha Lakes has demanded that the province of Ontario honour the results of the 2003 election as it pertains to the minister's question;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to honour the commitment made by Dalton McGuinty and to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I support this petition and I am signing my name to this.

#### HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that's been signed by thousands of people in the Ottawa-Renfrew area opposed to P3 hospitals. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas all hospitals since the inception of public medicare in Canada have been non-profit;

"Whereas 'public-private partnership' (P3) hospitals turn over democratic community control to international investors, making a public service into a commodity sold for profit;

"Whereas worldwide evidence is that private (P3) hospitals lead to doctor, nurse, staff and bed cuts in hospitals in order to make room for profit taking, consultant fees, higher borrowing costs and outrageous executive salaries;

"Whereas private (P3) hospitals hide information about the use of tax dollars by claiming 'commercial secrecy' when they privatize public institutions;

"Whereas the higher costs, user fees, two-tier services and culture of private (P3) hospitals risk the future sustainability of our public medicare system;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the government of Ontario to stop all current and future 'public-private partnership' (P3) hospital deals and return full ownership, operation, management and delivery of hospital services to non-profit hands and, further, to develop a plan to fund new hospitals through public financing"—just like Dalton McGuinty promised—"clearly excluding the privatization of hospital services."

I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

1550

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 17, 2005, on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The leader of the third party.

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** It's my honour and privilege today to respond on behalf of New Democrats to the speech from the throne.

Before I begin, Speaker, I want to congratulate you on your recent election.

I also want to extend my best wishes to MPPs from all parties as we begin this new session of the Ontario Parliament.

I think we all recognize that Ontario holds limitless opportunities for the people who live here, for all of us who have chosen Ontario as our home. It's a potential for prosperity that Ontario families embrace. It's a prosperity that can be shared and enjoyed by everyone, and it should be shared and enjoyed by everyone. It means a strong economy for everyone in every part of the province. It means high-quality public health care for everyone in every part of the province. It means educational opportunity for all. It means safe, strong communities. It means a hydroelectricity plan that makes sense for people no matter where they live in the province. It means respect and dignity for our most vulnerable citizens.

Most recently we've seen the spirit of Ontarians working together to make life better for everyone in response to the earthquake that struck India, Pakistan, Kashmir and Afghanistan. I've had the opportunity to visit mosques and participate in fundraising for these victims and their families. I'm greatly impressed by the generosity of Ontarians and the resolve to help family and friends suffering so far away.

Shortly after the earthquake, I sent a letter to the Premier and the leader of the official opposition where I proposed that the three of us meet to discuss ways we can work together to help. I extend that offer again today.

Again, I extend our sincerest condolences to those who have suffered pain, grief and loss.

Throne speech day is a key day for the government. It's the opportunity for the government to outline its agenda for the coming legislative session. It's supposed to set priorities, establish goals and set out how the government intends to meet its priorities and goals. It's supposed to be a day of vision and new ideas. Indeed, I think that's what people were hoping for and expecting from the McGuinty government in their most recent throne speech. Positive change and results for people are things that people expected to be front and centre in the McGuinty government's throne speech. In fact, real people are looking for real solutions to real challenges and real problems. That's what people were hoping for. Instead, the people of Ontario got what I could only describe as a hollow, empty throne speech, with no vision, no ideas and certainly no plan. Instead of a plan for positive results for people, ordinary families are told to settle for rehashed promises that the McGuinty government has spent the last two years breaking—broken promises on everything from health care to education to energy to the environment to help for Ontario's most vulnerable citizens.

In fact, the throne speech underscores something Ontario families have come to know too well of the McGuinty government. The McGuinty government makes promises with ease but then breaks those promises with even greater ease. As a result, people are starting to question whether they can trust anything this government says. People are starting to question whether they can trust this government to fulfill promises—promises made three years ago, promises made two years ago or promises made just last week in the throne speech.

I want to be clear: Ordinary families didn't start losing faith in Dalton McGuinty and his government and their promises just in this throne speech; they started to lose faith quite a long time ago. The morning of this year's throne speech, my colleague Michael Prue, the MPP for Beaches-East York, hosted a Shreddies breakfast. He pointed out that the Premier's reputation as a serial promise-breaker started with the Premier's first throne speech.

For example, the first promise: This new government made a commitment to maintain personal income tax rates at the current level. In fact, I remember one Dalton McGuinty staring into the television camera and saying, "I won't raise your taxes." Within a few months of assuming office, the McGuinty government whacked low- and moderate-income Ontarians with an unfair, regressive health tax, while at the same time cutting vital health services like physiotherapy, chiropractic care and eye care.

A second promise: "Your new government will be entering into new agreements for publicly owned hospitals in Brampton and Ottawa. This will ensure that these facilities are not privately owned." The result? The new contracts in Brampton and Ottawa are essentially the same as the old contracts signed under the Conservatives.



In fact, the former Conservative health minister said, "I don't see any difference."

Services vital to patient care will be privatized for at least 25 years, and the private consortia stand to make a fortune from the private financing of those hospitals. In fact, one health economist who has looked at it has said that the Brampton hospital will cost, in terms of building the physical structure, about \$525 million, but then he says that because the McGuinty government is going to turn the financing of the hospital over to Bay Street financiers—and they're in it for a profit—they will add \$175 million to the cost of the hospital. So what was a \$525-million hospital becomes a \$700-million hospital, but the additional \$175 million doesn't go to patient care. No; it goes into the pocket of Bay Street financiers.

New Democrats believe that if we have \$10 billion to spend on health care in the province of Ontario, if we can afford to put \$10 billion into the health care budget, then \$10 billion should go to health care. We shouldn't be siphoning off \$2 billion in order to finance the private sector financier friends of the McGuinty government. Money should not be taken from patient care in order to fatten the wallets of Bay Street financiers who happen from time to time to be the friends of the McGuinty government.

1600

Then there's the promise, "Your new government will do its part to ensure all of our businesses can operate in a stable climate, by delivering reliable, affordable electricity." What is the result? This is clearly a broken promise. Skyrocketing hydro costs are killing good jobs across Ontario. In fact, last year Ontario lost 42,000 good-paying, stable manufacturing jobs. Officials with General Motors report that their electricity costs are 93% higher this July than for the same month a year ago. In northern Ontario, the forest industry, which is the primary driver of the northern Ontario economy, is in crisis because of the McGuinty government's policy of driving up hydro-electricity rates—in fact, driving them through the roof.

Even before this new throne speech from the McGuinty government, ordinary citizens across the province knew that the McGuinty government doesn't keep its promises, and they understand that they shouldn't believe this government now because this government hasn't been believable over the last two years.

I want to deal with some specifics of the throne speech. If the Premier was looking to regain the trust of Ontario families, this throne speech doesn't get the job done. This throne speech in and of itself contains 60 promises that the Premier has spent the last two years breaking. In terms of new promises, ordinary families didn't get a bold vision or new ideas. Instead, what they heard from the throne speech was something that the government calls a "money-back" invitation. The last time somebody said to me, "If it doesn't work, I'll give you your money back," was when somebody was trying to sell me a used car. The statement went something like this: "If you don't believe that this lemon will still run, I'll give you your money back." That is hucksterism.

That isn't a plan; that isn't a vision; that is used-car hucksterism, and that's what people across Ontario heard loud and clear from the throne speech. Public relations gimmicks, hucksterism, are not now and never will be a substitute for good, sound public policy.

I just want to note the differential for people. You see, there are all kinds of people in Ontario who can't afford to have a computer and Internet service in their own homes. They can't afford the \$1,500 or \$2,000 for even a used computer and they can't afford the monthly charges for Internet service. So they have to apply for a birth certificate the way we have customarily applied. They fill out the forms and send them to the registrar general's office. What service will those people get? And we know what the historical record is: They will wait more than six months. In many cases they'll be told by the McGuinty government, "Oops, sorry. We lost your application, and we lost the application money. Send more money and send in another application," and this is after six or eight months. Do you know what? That is the service that lower- and modest-income people will still get from the McGuinty government. The McGuinty government thinks it fair, though, if you can afford to have a computer at home and can afford to have Internet service, that you get a superior level of service.

This hucksterism tells us a lot about the McGuinty government. If you can afford Internet service and you can afford to have a computer at home, the McGuinty government cares about you. But if you don't have sufficient income to buy that computer and keep it at home and have Internet service, you can wait and wait for something as essential as a birth certificate. This is hucksterism, but this hucksterism tells us a lot about whom the McGuinty government really cares about.

Despite this hucksterism by the McGuinty government, in general Ontarians are optimistic. They're optimistic because in general our people are highly skilled, they're highly motivated, they're highly educated and they're caring, compassionate people who want to make life better for everyone in this province. They understand that now is the time for new ideas to meet the new demands of a growing, wonderfully diverse population and the complicated challenges facing our province. But the approach of the last two years—excuses and broken promises and always finding someone else to blame—that approach by the McGuinty government hasn't worked.

I wonder what the average Ontarian thinks when, whenever there's a problem, the McGuinty government blames the Martin government in Ottawa. It recurs, over and over again. The McGuinty government said that they could put money into health care, money into education, money into social services and money to protect the environment, and they said they wouldn't have to raise taxes. Now, when they're caught, they wave the finger at the federal government and say, "It's your fault." When I ask a simple question, as I did today about what the plan is to store nuclear waste, what's the response from the McGuinty government? "That's a federal responsibility, the federal government's fault."

I wonder, what does the average Ontarian think when they see the McGuinty Liberals here blaming the Martin Liberals in Ottawa, and then, when the Martin Liberals in Ottawa get caught, they blame the McGuinty Liberals in Ontario? I wonder what people think of this nonsensical game where, whenever this government can't keep its promises or won't keep its promise, it looks for someone else to blame, in many cases this government's own federal cousins in Ottawa.

I think that people become dispirited; I think that people become disillusioned. It would be far better if this government simply stood up and said, "You know what? We can't keep these promises because we're unwilling to raise tax revenue; we're unwilling to do the things that would be necessary to put the funding into education, to put the funding into social services, to put the funding into protecting the environment."

Rather than going through this silly game of constantly blaming the federal Liberals in Ottawa—I wonder if ordinary folks across Ontario know that the Premier's own brother is a federal Liberal MP. When the Premier goes out to help his federal Liberal MP brother get re-elected in Ottawa and then, just a couple of months later, turns around and says, "It's the federal government's fault"—how silly; how nonsensical. But that has become their favourite policy. Mr. Peterson over here, who I can only assume also likes blaming his brother in Ottawa, who sits as a federal Liberal cabinet minister—how nonsensical.

Do you realize how ridiculous you look? Whenever you get in trouble, you want to blame your cousins, your brothers, your distant relatives, your former staff who are now part of the federal Liberal government. Far better for you to show some leadership; far better for you to take some responsibility rather than going through this silly game of pretending one minute that the Liberals in Ottawa are somehow the bogeymen, the bad guys, and the next instant, two or three months later, you're out there fundraising for them and trying to get them re-elected again. Drop the charade. Drop the games.

A lot of this doesn't make sense to ordinary families across Ontario. It doesn't make sense to them because, for almost everyone I talk to across this province, their experience is that under the McGuinty government they are working harder and they are working longer, but at the end of the month, when they add up the paycheque and the bills, they have less.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** It's getting worse and worse.

**Mr. Hampton:** And it's getting worse, and it's especially getting worse for the lowest-income people in Ontario.

I can remember when the members of the McGuinty Liberal team used to criticize the former Conservative government and say that the former Conservative government was mean-spirited and nasty when it came to the lowest-income Ontarians. But I can tell you that it is worse under the McGuinty government. It is worse: The hydro bill has increased, the heating bill has increased

and the rental bill has increased. If you're trying to send your kids off to college or university, the cost of doing that has increased. But the income hasn't increased.

**1610**

The promise to end the clawback: If ever there was a government that shows itself to be morally bankrupt, that promise to end the clawback, to stop taking federal money out of the pockets of the poorest, the lowest-income Ontarians, and then right after the election to deny that this government had ever made that promise, to continue to take federal money out of the pockets of the lowest-income Ontarians, is disgraceful. It is nothing less than disgraceful. And to do that in the context of the Premier saying before the last election that it was immoral—immoral—to have this kind of clawback, that it was wrong, it was immoral, and to say that a Liberal government would end it, and now to continue it, is certainly disgraceful.

So here is the reality for the majority of Ontarians. They are working longer. They are working harder. In many cases, it's not one job; it's one job during the day, another job in the evening and another job on the weekend, trying to make ends meet, trying to pay the rent, put food on the table and look after their kids. What's their experience? That it is more difficult now under the McGuinty government than it was even before under the former Conservative government, despite all the holier-than-thou and sanctimonious promises from this Liberal government that it was going to make a difference for the lowest-income Ontarians.

I want to talk just for a minute about something that we know is a critical issue facing Ontario. Ontario is an industrial province. Ontario's economy is based upon our manufacturing. Whether it be manufacturing autos and auto parts, steel and other kinds of manufacturing in southern Ontario or whether it be the manufacturing of pulp and paper and lumber and other metal products in northern Ontario, this is a manufacturing province. Let's make no mistake, manufacturing requires energy. It requires affordable energy, a reliable supply of energy.

What were people told by the McGuinty government before the last election? One of the things they were told is that the McGuinty government was going to freeze hydro rates into 2006. That was one of the promises. And what's happened to people's hydro bills since? People's hydro bills have skyrocketed.

General Motors tells the story for industry. Their hydro bill this July as compared to last July is up by 93%. If you want to compare a paper mill in Ontario with a paper mill in Quebec or a paper mill in Manitoba, a paper mill in northern Ontario now has a monthly hydro-electricity bill that is double—double—what a paper mill would pay in Quebec, Manitoba or British Columbia. If it's a \$1-million-a-month hydro bill in Quebec, Manitoba or British Columbia, it's a \$2-million-a-month hydro bill in Ontario. And this from a government that said it was going to freeze hydroelectricity rates into 2006, this from a government that promised it was going to freeze hydro rates into 2006.



What's the result of that broken promise? The result is—and we see it all across northern Ontario—400 jobs lost in the city of Kenora, in my riding, because the paper mill is shutting down; another 150 jobs lost at the Cascades mill in Thunder Bay because the paper mill is shutting down a machine; another 30 jobs lost at a chemical plant in Thunder Bay because they can't afford to pay the hydro bill any further.

What are they doing? They're going to move the operation into Manitoba. What is Cascades going to do with their paper operation in Thunder Bay? They're going to shut down production at that mill in Thunder Bay and move production, shared between Quebec and Manitoba. There are another 175 jobs at the Norampac mill in Red Rock, and what's Norampac going to do? They are going to move production to Quebec. There are another 150 jobs at Terrace Bay, because they've shut down a mill there. All of this is under the watch of the McGuinty government. Is the McGuinty government doing anything to address these issues? In fact, they're making the problem worse.

Let me tell you the reality for people who live in northwestern Ontario. Northwestern Ontario isn't even part of the southern Ontario electricity grid system. People who live in northwestern Ontario are part of a separate grid. That's why, in the blackout of the summer of 2003 when the lights went out all across southern and northeastern Ontario, the lights stayed on west of Wawa, because there's only a very small linkage. What does that mean? What it means is the McGuinty government could shut down every paper mill, every pulp mill, every sawmill, every mining operation, and yes, the McGuinty government is doing that, and as a result of shutting down all those operations and putting thousands of people out of work and decimating the local economies, which the McGuinty government is doing on a consistent basis, they could have a surplus of 1,000 megawatts of electricity in northwestern Ontario. You know what? That electricity would just sit there, because you can't take it anywhere, you can't move it anywhere. You couldn't move it to southern Ontario. You couldn't move it into the United States. You can't move it to Quebec. You can't move it to Manitoba.

So what's the rationale for forcing paper mills, pulp mills, sawmills, mining operations in northwestern Ontario, many of which are located five kilometres, 10 kilometres away from a hydroelectricity dam where electricity is produced for \$10 a megawatt, what's the McGuinty government's rationale for forcing those paper mills to pay \$80 and \$90 a megawatt for that electricity that costs only \$10 a megawatt to produce a short way down the river? Is it going to lead to more energy efficiency or more energy sustainability in southern Ontario? No. You can't move the electricity from there to here. Is it going to somehow create a new industry to replace it for the tens of thousands of people who lose their jobs, the tens of thousands of families who have lost everything they've worked for? Is it going to do anything for that? No. It's a completely irrational policy.

We saw just the other day the province of Quebec taking some action to ensure that forest sector jobs in that province are sustainable. What have we seen from the McGuinty government? Well, we saw in June this promise of loan guarantees. What was the response of the industry? The industry said, "This is no help. The last thing we need is a McGuinty government telling us to take on more debt. The last thing we need is the McGuinty government designing a strategy to help us take on more debt." The first response of the McGuinty government was a complete non-starter.

So then the Minister of Natural Resources said, "We're going to come forward with a strategy," a few months later. They made another announcement, but did that announcement deal with this disparity in electricity rates? Did it treat those paper mills, pulp mills and sawmills any more fairly? No, it didn't address the issue at all.

In fact, what's happening is that tens of thousands of workers, people who do their job, who get up every morning, who go to work, who pay their taxes, who contribute to their community, who are responsible citizens of Ontario, are being put out of work by a McGuinty government policy that is grossly unfair to them. What is the response from the Premier? The Premier tries to say that this is somehow globalization. It's not globalization that is forcing people who live in northern Ontario, that is forcing paper mills in northern Ontario that are only 10 or 20 kilometres away from a hydro dam that provides electricity at \$10 a megawatt, to pay \$80 or \$90 a megawatt for that electricity. It is the McGuinty government first, last and always, and it's the McGuinty government that's responsible for killing jobs, for shutting down paper mills, and for decimating communities across northern Ontario.

#### 1620

I want to talk about what we've seen of the so-called McGuinty government electricity plan over the last two years, because if ever there were a case of not just broken promises but of, frankly, holding photo ops and spinning out press releases that make absolutely no difference for people—in fact, make the situation worse—that's what this government has been doing. As we have seen over the last two years, this is a government that talks about a culture of conservation, but no one is seeing anything remotely like a conservation strategy or policy. This is a government that likes to use the buzzwords of "energy efficiency" but has no plan for energy efficiency.

If you lived in Manitoba right now, or the province of Quebec, neither of those provinces is short of electricity—in fact, they both have surpluses—but they take this issue seriously. If you lived in Manitoba today and were a homeowner, you could get a \$5,000 low-interest loan so you could afford to go out and reinsulate your home so that it uses less electricity or less natural gas. You could use that loan to put in high-efficiency, energy-efficient windows. You could use that loan to purchase home appliances, like a refrigerator, that are energy-efficient so that you actually reduce your electricity con-

sumption. Then, by reducing your electricity consumption and your natural gas consumption because you've got a more energy-efficient home, with whatever money you save on your hydro bill every month, you can use that to pay off the loan.

If you live in Quebec, the same thing prevails. Quebec, which has a surplus of electricity, has an energy efficiency plan whereby Quebec residents can reinsulate their homes, can install efficient electrical appliances, can put in energy-efficient windows. As a result of reducing their electricity and gas consumption and saving money, they can use that money to pay off the low-interest loan.

Is that happening in Ontario? Do we have anything like that kind of thoughtful energy efficiency strategy from the McGuinty government? No. A government that boasts about conservation, that boasts about having a culture of conservation, that uses the buzzwords of "energy efficiency," has no such strategy whatsoever. None. No strategy.

Every once in a while, though, when the public becomes aware of this, this government holds another photo op. The last photo op—and it was embarrassing to anybody who thought about it—was the former Minister of Energy basically standing before a map, and this was his essential message: that someday, maybe, perhaps, possibly, Ontario might purchase electricity from Labrador—someday, maybe, perhaps, possibly. Well, you know what? That will take 20 years. What are people across Ontario to do in the next 20 years: watch the hydro bill skyrocket through the roof, watch themselves and family members lose their jobs? That is the depth—or the lack of depth, the complete superficiality—of the McGuinty government's so-called hydroelectricity plan: that it might someday, perhaps, maybe, possibly purchase some electricity from Labrador, 20 years down the road.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** Manitoba too, Howard.

**Mr. Hampton:** Well, the Manitoba one is even more fun, because this is a government, I swear, that at least 12 times now has held press conferences, photo ops, talking about the fact that they might buy electricity from Manitoba. Yet when I talk to officials in Manitoba, they say, "Nothing's signed." The McGuinty government talks about it a lot, the McGuinty government refers to it a lot, but no deal, no contract. This is another of those, "Someday, possibly, perhaps, maybe the McGuinty government might purchase some electricity," after they've driven the hydro bill through the roof in Ontario and after they've signed another cozy deal for private, profit-driven nuclear power at Bruce. It's something they say is a \$4.5-billion deal, but when you find out that the electricity consumers of Ontario are on the hook for cost overruns—and yes, there are always cost overruns at the refurbishment of a nuclear plant—and the McGuinty government is going to give this private, profit-driven company a \$60-million-a-year reduction on the lease payments they're supposed to make, it amounts to a \$6.5-billion boondoggle.

No wonder Bruce Power is going to Bay Street, Wall Street and Fleet Street in the city of London boasting

about what a great deal they got from the McGuinty government, a \$2-billion giveaway side deal on top of the principal deal. If I were Bruce Power, I'd be boasting about that too on my way to the bank. Good deal for Bruce Power; incredibly expensive hydro rates for the people of Ontario. But I guess that is the McGuinty government's real electricity plan: Go nuclear, go big and go private.

**Mr. Marchese:** That's it.

**Mr. Hampton:** That's it. After two years of trying to hide that fact, that is the McGuinty government's plan for electricity in this province.

Also in the context, though, I want to ask about what happened in 2004. You see, what we know now is that in 2004, almost two years ago, electricity consumers in this province were overcharged by the McGuinty government to the tune of \$528 million. That's how much people were overcharged.

When someone is overcharged, when the rules say you're only supposed to be charged this much, but then this huckster comes along and charges you this much, the money should be returned. If I heard the throne speech about, you know, the money-back guarantee, those consumers in Ontario who were overcharged to the tune of \$528 million should have gotten their money back. This was known in February. February passed, March passed, April passed, May passed, and June, July, August and September, and now we're into October. Nine months have passed, and have the people gotten their money back from the McGuinty government? No—nowhere to be seen.

So when the McGuinty government says, "This will be a good deal for you and you'll get your money back," don't you believe them. They've been hanging on to the people's money for nine months. I repeat, this is not the McGuinty government's money; this money belongs to the hydro consumers of Ontario. They should have gotten their money back. But the hucksters who say, "Try the deal or we'll send you the money back" aren't returning the money. They're hanging on to the money. This tells you, once again, a lot about the McGuinty government.

I want to go on to another issue which I think is very important. In fact, if you do some polling or some opinion research, most Ontarians will tell you that this is the most important issue for them. It's called health care.

We had a very unusual decision come out of the Supreme Court of Canada. In fact, I think it's a bad decision, but it's a decision nonetheless. It's a decision that originates in Quebec. It's called the Chaoulli ruling and it's a very big threat to medicare. In fact, health care experts, medicare experts, not just across Ontario but across Canada, have said this is a very serious issue. I thought we would see in the throne speech a definitive statement from the McGuinty government that they were going to take this on, that they were going to protect Ontario's publicly funded, publicly administered health care system from further privatization, that they were going to ensure that medicare was sustained.



Did we see any such statement? Did we see any plan? Did we see any vision in the throne speech to do that? No; none whatsoever; no defence for medicare whatsoever in the McGuinty government's throne speech. In fact, instead of a defence, what we're seeing is the McGuinty government patting itself on the back for private financing of hospitals, inviting the Bay Street financiers into our hospitals, inviting the Bay Street financiers to take money out of the health care budget, not for patient care, but to line their own pockets.

1630

What's the history of these private financing hospitals? This is something that Margaret Thatcher brought to Great Britain. It's very interesting to read the history of what has gone on there, because what has happened is this: Private corporations who get involved with the financing of hospitals, their primary interest is, "How much money can we make?" Their secondary—it's not even the secondary. Their tertiary interest is the quality of the health care system.

Let me just give you one example of a private financing hospital in Britain. This one happened, I believe, near Edinburgh. The private financing company got wind that it could pick up some cheap land. The cheap land was over abandoned mine sites. So in these private financing deals, this is all under their control. If they can assemble cheap land, better for them—maybe not better for the hospital or the health care system, but better for them. So they purchased this land that was over an abandoned mine, and that's where they built this private financing hospital.

The McGuinty government will tell you that this was a fine project because it was delivered on time and on budget. But you know what? When it rains, the tunnels in the mine fill up with water, and the rats who live in the mine come out of the mine. And guess where they go? They go into the hospital. Here is a hospital that now spends a major part of its operating budget trying to keep the rats out of the hospital.

But when I asked the government's Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal if this was a good deal, you know what he said? He said that the hospital was finished on time and on budget. Imagine. Would you want to send someone in your family who was ill into that hospital when they might wake up from surgery, they might wake up in the middle of the night, and who's there cozying up to them in bed? Not the nurse, but a big rat.

This is what the McGuinty government portrays as being good for health care in Ontario. But that's not the only example. There was another one of these private financing hospitals, farther south in England, where the company, the private financing company that was paying for the hospital and arranging for the construction, discovered that they could save money—they could make money—by doing some innovative things with the sewage system in the hospital. So they did these innovative things, and you know what? It did cost less money to build the sewage system, given this innovation that they brought. That's one of the selling points that the

McGuinty government talks about. They say, "Oh, this private financing is going to lead to innovation." But you know what was really innovative about this? There are a lot of fluids in hospitals that you need to dispose of in a safe way, because if you don't, they can contaminate the hospital and they can lead to serious health problems, not only for other patients, but for workers. This private financing hospital was so innovative that when physicians are washing their hands to prepare for surgery, it's not unusual that they see blood gurgle up in the sink. This was the innovation of this private financing project.

I asked the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, who promotes this, "Is this a good deal?" You know what his response was? "The hospital was constructed on time and on budget," as if to say it doesn't matter if the sewage system leads to health problems, leads to disinfection problems and, frankly, leads to a situation where you wouldn't want to put someone from your family—and I can certainly tell you that I would never want someone from my family in that hospital, not as a patient or working there either. But this is what the McGuinty government says is going to be a fine model for our hospital system.

At a time when medicare needs to be defended, at a time when medicare needs to be sustained, what is the McGuinty government going to do? They're going to invite the private sector, they're going to invite Bay Street financiers to repeat in Ontario the same sorry experience that you now see as part of the historical record in Great Britain. Then there's the increased privatization that we actually see just in the OHIP plan. I remember Dalton McGuinty saying before the election that under a McGuinty government there would be no cuts to health care.

I want to tell you about the kind of communities that I represent, communities where people work very, very hard, where it's not unusual that people will get up at 3 o'clock in the morning and be out in the forest working as loggers at 5 in the morning. They'll put in a 10- or 11-hour day. It's tough work, and in some cases it's dangerous work. A lot of those workers, because it's such back-breaking work, such difficult work, need access to a chiropractor. Do you know what? Access to a chiropractor used to be one of those insured services under OHIP until Dalton McGuinty cut it.

Despite his promise of no cuts to health care, one of the first things they did was cut health care. What does it mean? A lot of these people who need chiropractic care in order to be able to go to work on an ongoing basis, in order to continue to have some mobility, in order to continue to work and be productive, have been cut off. They've been told that this no longer matters in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Yes, some people can afford it out of their own pocket, but other people can't. Other people cannot afford to pay those bills. They don't have extra money in their pocket. This is what the McGuinty government calls a defence of medicare.

Then there's optometry. I want to tell you about the reality in my part of Ontario: I suspect it's the reality in

your part of Ontario, Speaker, where you have a lot of aboriginal people. One of the best ways, one of the first ways to diagnose that someone may be suffering from diabetes is an examination by an optometrist. An optometrist can tell by examining someone's eyes if they are in the initial stages of diabetes. By making that diagnosis, they can save the health care system literally millions of dollars, because, Speaker, you must know that diabetes that is not recognized, that is not treated very early, on can result in all kinds of health complications. It can result in a heart attack; it can result in blindness; it can result in limb amputation—all those complications.

I don't think I need to tell you that those kinds of things cost the health care system millions of dollars. When you start amputating limbs, when you have to follow a regime where someone has suffered a heart attack or a stroke, when you have to deal with issues like blindness, that can involve millions of dollars in treatment costs.

What does the McGuinty government do? Instead of continuing to ensure that optometry is an insured service within our OHIP, our medicare system, the McGuinty government cuts it. The same situation: Yes, there are some people who can afford to pay whatever the fee is themselves, but there are lots of people who cannot afford to pay it. I can tell you, Speaker, in the part of Ontario that you're from and the part of Ontario that I'm from, there are tens of thousands of aboriginal people who cannot afford to pay it. They are especially at risk of the complications of diabetes. Did the McGuinty government protect medicare there? Did they sustain medicare there? No, they cut it, to the detriment of the health of hundreds of thousands of people in Ontario, a decision that, when the full complications are known, is going to cost the health care system down the road millions of dollars more because we will be dealing with people who are suffering from blindness, we will be dealing with more heart attacks, we will be dealing with more strokes and we will be dealing with more limb amputations and everything that goes along with that—a terrible decision, an indefensible decision by a government that said it was not going to cut health care in Ontario.

1640

Then there's the whole issue of private cancer clinics. I want to be very clear with people about what's going on here. If, in private cancer clinics, if you have a thick wallet, you can get to the front of the line, or you might be able to get treatment that is not available to someone else, it seems to me the situation is simple here; there's a very simple test. If the medications, the drugs and the treatment plans being advertised by those private cancer treatment centres are found in other provinces to contribute to better health and are found by other, independent tests to contribute to the treatment of cancer, those should be insured services in Ontario. By definition, we should not have in Ontario one tier of treatment for people who have thick wallets and a lesser tier of treatment for people who do not have thick wallets and have to depend upon the medicare system.

What has the McGuinty government said about this? What has the McGuinty government done about this? They have tried to ignore the whole issue. They have tried to pretend that this is not an issue at all. Is this a defence of medicare? Is this a defence of publicly funded, publicly administered health care? I think, by any test, not at all.

In a similar situation, once again I was looking for some vision, some direction, some plan, some ideas in the throne speech. I'm talking about the issue of garbage; 15 years ago it was Toronto's garbage. There obviously is no space within the city of Toronto to store garbage. Most of it is now developed land or potentially developable land. So in that period of time it was a question of where in the greater Toronto area Toronto's garbage could be disposed of. Now it's not just Toronto; it's the whole greater Toronto region. It has become a much bigger problem.

I was looking in the throne speech. I thought that surely there must be a statement of a plan here, because what's happening now, with the greater Toronto area's garbage being shipped to Michigan—I may be wrong, but given what I'm reading out of the Congress of the United States and what I hear out of the mouths of political representatives from Michigan, I would say it's very likely that Toronto's garbage very soon is either going to be refused or severely restricted at the Ontario border with Michigan. Is there a plan from the McGuinty government? Is there an idea, is there a concept, is there a strategy, anything, in the throne speech? Nothing.

I thought at least we would see the government move forward just a little bit on what it said before the election. They said before the election that they were going to have an ambitious plan for waste reduction, that they were going to have an ambitious plan to ensure that there was not only reduction but reuse and recycling, and that they were going to financially assist municipalities to do this. I thought that at least there would be a reference in the throne speech about some concrete things that were being done. Was there any reference to that? No. In fact, when the Premier is asked about this, he wants to pretend that this isn't happening in Ontario, that somehow this is not something that the government needs to respond to. He has the audacity to say that the municipality has to look after it. The municipality of Toronto doesn't have the legal authority to require another municipality in Ontario to take their garbage; Mississauga doesn't have the legal authority to require someone to look after their garbage; and it's the same with York region and Durham region. They do not have the legal authority to require someone to enter into an agreement with them to facilitate it. Clearly what's needed here is a provincial plan, clearly what's needed here is the McGuinty government to take on the responsibility of governing, but what do we see? In the throne speech we see an attempt by the McGuinty government to pretend that this isn't even an issue.

Another area I want to talk about a bit is education. Boy, this government spares no end of propaganda trying



to convince people that they really care about education. I remember before the last election hearing from not just the Premier but from just about everybody who sat in the Liberal caucus that the funding formula for our elementary and secondary schools had to be corrected, that under the former Conservative government there was gross underfunding of elementary and secondary schools. There was just commitment after commitment after commitment that a McGuinty government would improve and correct the funding formula.

We're now two years into the McGuinty government, and wherever I go I ask people who sit on boards of education, I ask teachers and I ask parents, "Have you seen a difference in the funding formula?" Do you know what they tell me? What they tell me is this: They're even more hard-pressed now. They tell me that, instead of more funding for special education, instead of being able to do more on English as a second language, instead of being able to do more in terms of meeting the real, day-to-day needs of students in the classroom, they're actually taking money out of the special education budget; they're taking money out of the English-as-a-second-language budget. Do you know why? They take it out to pay the hydro bill; they take it out to pay the heating bill. Why? Because the funding formula that was supposed to be corrected and changed under the McGuinty government hasn't been corrected and changed. So, as the hydro bill goes up, as it doubles, there's no allocation for that. As the heating bill goes up, there's no allocation for that. As the insurance industry spreads the loss, whether it be from Hurricane Katrina or some other disaster, and schools find that their insurance costs are going up, there's no money in the budget for that. So boards of education end up taking money which was supposed to meet the needs of students just to keep the lights on, keep the building heated and pay the insurance bill.

The Premier and the Minister of Education want people to believe that there are going to be smaller classes, that there are going to be more teachers in the schools. So I've asked directors of education about that too. I've said, "How does this work?" They've said, "Well, actually it doesn't work right now." There was no additional money in the budget a year ago and there's very little additional money in the budget this year—certainly not enough to meet the hydro costs, the heating costs and the additional insurance costs. There might be a little bit of money next year, but where all the money has to show up is in the spring of 2007. This has all been back-loaded.

What that means is that our schools are essentially living another McGuinty promise. They don't know if the money that was promised is going to be there in 2007 or not. They're operating on a hope and a prayer. They're desperate that there be some new money by 2007; otherwise, they are really in trouble. They will not have enough money to pay salaries of existing teachers now, never mind new, additional teachers, never mind covering the cost of English as a second language or special education or all the other things that have to be addressed. Once again, even in this area of education, what

it really boils down to is that while the money might be there in 2007—and schools are hopeful, they are prayerful, that it will be there in 2007—frankly, they don't know. They have no idea for sure that the money is going to be there.

**1650**

I just want to talk a bit about the environment. I want to talk about the environment because, again, we were told by this government before the election and during the election that they were really going to make a difference for the environment. I searched this throne speech to see how often the environment was mentioned. You know what? The environment was hardly there. It was as if the issue of the environment, like the garbage, didn't exist any more. It wasn't on the agenda. What I heard right after the throne speech is the McGuinty government's announcement that they want to store more nuclear waste in Ontario, nuclear waste that is toxic to human life for thousands of years. But in the throne speech, I didn't hear a peep about the environment. Again, I say to people, watch these promises, these promises that are routinely broken.

I have to conclude. Let me simply say this to people: It should be obvious by now that the McGuinty government does make promises with ease. This is a government that makes all the right speeches. They say all the right things, but they don't deliver. This is a government that doesn't deliver. This is a government that finds it, oh, so easy to promise: to promise that they're going to extend treatment to autistic kids and then after the election turn their back and pretend that parents with autistic children over five years old don't exist. This is a government that doesn't deliver. It says all the right things, says them over and over again, holds all the photo ops, holds the photo ops over and over again, gives all the right speeches, and then doesn't deliver.

So I say to people across Ontario, here we go. You heard the fine words in the throne speech, you heard the repetition of promises, but watch and listen carefully, because I'm afraid what you are going to find is that once again, despite all the speeches, despite all the promises, the McGuinty government isn't going to deliver. This will be another year of broken promises; another year of blaming someone else; another year of excuses.

Thank you for your time, Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** Speaker, just before I begin my speech, I would like to let you know that I'll be sharing my time with the member from Perth—Middlesex.

The opportunity to speak to the issue is very important because we're talking about the throne speech. I did a little homework. I scanned previous throne speeches over the last 10 or 15 years. By way of explanation of throne speeches, I think people should be made aware that this is somewhat of a template of how the boat wants to be steered to move it forward. So in terms of the document itself, people are spending quite a bit of time in saying, "Well, it didn't say specifically how much money you were going to spend." They are saying stuff like, "You

didn't outline every single thing you are planning to do as a government."

The throne speech is basically the catalyst for the debates, the catalyst for the creation of the bills and the catalyst for the vision that governments have. Previous governments have laid out throne speeches that changed the direction. Some throne speeches in my research basically talked about staying the course. Some other throne speeches talked about a specific or the odd idea that they were focusing on and made it their priority in their government during that particular term.

I just wanted to make it clear that throne speeches are that, indeed: the idea of how you present the vision and what you're going to do to get there. So I want to make reference to that right off the bat and explain some of the things that have happened. I appreciate the opportunity for us to debate that. We've heard two opposing views of what the throne speech is all about. I plan to present a couple of ideas that one of the members opposite gave us.

As far as the NDP is concerned, and I know the member from Whitby would agree with me on this, it's strictly, "The sky is falling. There is absolutely nothing significant happening in the government of Ontario." In terms of governance, my concern with the characterization of "The sky is falling" is that there was very little comeback.

But the one thing that I know he would also agree with me on is the fact that their solution in his response, if you heard it clearly—because I wasn't quite sure if he wanted to say it cryptically or whether he was coming right out and saying it—was that we want to increase taxes big time. We want to take and put those taxes as high as we can and start raising them so that we can have an opportunity to do that. So I'm concerned with that. I know the member opposite is a very large champion of that and actually, quite to his credit, never leaves that course and basically talks about tax cuts everywhere and anywhere he can and explains to us that the social side of his economic vision is better served by completely having tax cuts right through. After eight years, that's why we ended up with a budget deficit of \$5.2 billion.

We need to discuss the balance that's being presented in this, the balance that—

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** It was \$6.2 billion.

**Mr. Levac:** It was \$6.2 billion originally. We've brought that down, and I'll talk about that in a couple of minutes too, my member from Ottawa.

One of the things that I think we need to talk about explicitly, in my opportunity, is education. When I talk about education, I want to talk about my 25 years in education in my riding. I'm not going to pretend to stand in front of you and say that I know exactly what's going on in every single board. Some people would have you believe they've called every single director of education and got the scoop as to exactly what's happening in every classroom in the province of Ontario.

The minister has made it quite clear that this government does not want to micromanage from Queen's Park.

They want to devolve some of that decision-making into the classrooms. One of the beliefs that we've articulated since 2003—even before that, but that got us elected in 2003—was class sizes in the primary divisions, from junior kindergarten to grade 3. There is evidence all over the place—except for the fact that it's not acknowledged that the investment's made not on the board's dollar but on the province's dollar—that 2,400 new teachers have been hired to articulate that particular vision of bringing those class sizes down. We've reached somewhere around the 40% rate, and sooner or later—I hope sooner, quite frankly—we'll reach the 100% mark where we have all of our classrooms at that level of 20 students per classroom, with a variance. I think the variance is one student or two students, but those negotiations are ongoing with directors of education.

Quite frankly, we want to take a step even in front of that. One of the things that the throne speech did talk about clearly—and let me put the four pillars together for us so that it explains exactly where this vision is taking us and the fact that it's going to take us a while to get there. But we're going to be seeing success and it's going to be measured, with results expected at the end of the term. That's very clearly laid out. It's laid out in a platform, it's laid out right across the board on several occasions, and I'll lay it out again. There are going to be results expected at the end of the term.

Here are the four pillars.

Young children will be ready to learn when they arrive in school for the first time: an unprecedented investment in what's called Best Start. That means that we have identified where kids do their best learning. McCain and Mustard have made it quite clear. I was privy to research from about 20 years ago that was saying the same thing, so it's not as if this is brand new, but to quantify it in science is a good thing to do. That's exactly what happened in terms of brain development and all of the things that are necessary for us to understand how children learn. We now know that there's an opportunity for us to move forward in front of the educational system in two aspects: One is child development and brain development itself, and the social aspect, which is daycare, and an opportunity for us to make sure that the children are cared for in every aspect, regardless of economic or socioeconomic standing, to have them prepared to learn when they come to school. That is the first pillar. We've made unprecedented investments in that, and we're getting there. We're getting results.

1700

I want to make a reference to my riding. My riding is doing what's called Launch Pad, with Early Years, Kids Can Fly, school boards and other agencies. Quite frankly, we're getting investment from the private sector, because they've identified a need in terms of how we end up having the best shot, the best bang for our buck. They're making investments in that particular program.

The Launch Pad program in Brant is being modelled in several other places in the province. Indeed, they're being asked across the United States to take a look at this



program. So I'm highly complimentary of that particular program. It's a companion to the Best Start philosophy that this government has.

The next pillar: School children can read, write and do mathematics at a higher level by the time they reach 12 years of age. You will see that between Best Start, which is just before school, the primary division between junior kindergarten and grade 3, and up to 12 years old, there's a high expectation that there's going to be success and results based in terms of the commitment from the government to measure those results. So there's going to be an understanding from all the experts that we need to find a way to measure that by the 12th year.

The third pillar is keeping young people learning until the age of 18. As the principal of an elementary school, I know the old-fashioned complaints—I taught; I knew all about this—that we're seeing from the other side, "Well, you can't keep a 15- or 16-year-old in school, so why are you going to make an 18-year-old go to school?" They completely ignored what the answer was. All of us in education and most of the parents knew that you don't keep them in the classroom; you find alternatives, and that's what we're going to accomplish. Those alternatives are even going to be the world of work.

We're going to be identifying ways in which those 18-year-olds can continue to learn. We're going to work with those career colleges. We're going to work with the college system and Minister Bentley's progress on that front. Minister Bentley is over there. We're going to work with the career link organizations. We're going to be working with all of our partners to help students learn at that precious age, not to turn them off but to turn them on to learning, and to show them that they can be equal partners in this system.

The system originally was an agrarian system, so it's not speaking to that any more. We've made that evolution as we've gone through. We want them to have hope and we want them to have a direction. We want to help the parents give them the tools to help them stay. So apprenticeship programs are improving, and all of the areas that we've made those commitments to.

The fourth pillar—Speaker, I've got about 25 more minutes' worth of speaking and I've only got about a minute left. I'm going to defer to my colleague.

The fourth pillar I want to talk about is learning beyond the school and university and college. Here are the other areas that we're making a commitment to: improving the apprenticeship programs, the skills development programs—and that's something I've been harping on in my own riding. I'm a member of the Brant Skills Development Group, which is working with private industry to get those students re-interested in the skills program and get the highest quality from that.

Speaker, I have to tell you, I probably do have another 25 minutes to speak, but I wanted to focus on that area. And guess what, Speaker? The sky is not falling. We're moving forward. I have to make one more comment about that, and that is, people are talking about lost jobs. Boy, you've got to come to Brantford and Brant, because

we just picked up another factory. We've got about five brand new factories in the last little while thanks to the government's beautiful initiative about Places to Grow, the companion to the greenbelt legislation. So I want to tell you, we're looking at, on a shot, approximately 5,000 jobs being created in my riding alone in the next five years.

We're doing the right things. We've moved the Queen Mary. We're now headed down the path and we're going to stay. That course is heading us to prosperity because of knowledge and education and a good health care system.

I defer to the member from Perth—Middlesex. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm pleased to recognize the member for Perth—Middlesex.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth—Middlesex):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to see you in the chair yet again. Welcome back.

**Mr. Marchese:** He doesn't mean it.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I want to say to the member from Trinity—Spadina, I think the member for Waterloo—Wellington does a wonderful job in the chair, and I'm sure that you agree with me.

**Mr. Marchese:** I agree with you.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I'm sure you do.

I am also honoured to join in the debate today about the throne speech. But if you'll indulge me, Mr. Speaker, there is something I would like to share with all the members from all three parties about an event that we are collectively hosting tomorrow here at Queen's Park in regard to The Quilt, which is a project that supports breast cancer survivors.

It started in my riding in Stratford under the leadership of Carol Miller. I am quite happy that Mrs. Munro and Ms. Horwath from the other two caucuses are joining with me in having a reception tomorrow at noon in room 228 and 230. We're very happy to hear now that the Lieutenant Governor will be attending. His wife, Mrs. Bartleman, is, like me, an honorary patron of The Quilt project. We're very happy she's able to join us. The MC will be Paula Todd from TVO. Each member is being asked to donate a piece of fabric, a tie or a scarf, that will be incorporated in an Ontario quilt, the design of which will be revealed tomorrow. Also, all members will be asked to sign a panel so that this Ontario quilt will have the signatures of all 103 of us—well, at the moment 102 of us, because our colleague Mr. Curling is in the Dominican Republic, but perhaps we will have number 103 sooner than we think.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for indulging me. I want to talk specifically about the throne speech. It is an opportunity for all of us to pause after two years of the McGuinty mandate, halfway to the next election. Of course, we all know when that will be: October 4, 2007—my daughter's 19th birthday, I might add. I can never forget that date.

For me, I look at it and I say to my riding, what have we gained within the riding in the last two years? The first thing I would mention is health care. After years and years, I was proud to be able to announce on behalf of the

McGuinty government that the province of Ontario would finally play its rightful role. We contributed, by cheque, some \$7.8 million for a \$16-million redevelopment of Listowel Memorial Hospital. I can assure you that the good people of Listowel had waited a long time.

In my remarks, I praised my predecessor, Mr. Johnson, who was the member for Perth and then Perth-Middlesex for the last eight years. He had been able to secure a commitment of just over \$5 million for the project, but there was no money forthcoming. So it was a proud day for the people of Listowel when that cheque arrived.

Recently, I was going by Minister Smitherman on the opening day of the International Plowing Match, where he had an opportunity to turn the sod for that redevelopment. They'll be getting a new OR, a new ER, new diagnostic imaging, a new power plant, and that will form the basis of a complete internal renovation of that facility. It's quite amazing. On a very small footprint, over the next 20 years that hospital will completely rebuild itself. As Minister Smitherman has said, what doctors are looking for is not bigger; they're looking for better.

That was a pretty happy day. You can imagine how happy I was, then, to go to Stratford, where our hospital, the Stratford General site of the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance, has been waiting some 14 years now, to announce on behalf of Minister Smitherman and Minister Caplan the government's commitment of some \$20 million for the \$40-million redevelopment of the Stratford General site. I campaigned on that, and I must admit, it was a very good day for my hometown, that we're able to move forward. We've said—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I'm not glowing like the member for Huron-Bruce is in these last couple of days. She's very happy. But we have good days in Perth-Middlesex as well. I know that for me the fact that there is money going in is important, but it's all about the people we need to care for.

In hospitals every day, people have the best days of their lives. I recall my minister, Laurel Broten, the member from Etobicoke-Lakeshore, in a hospital having, I would assume, one of the most joyous days of her life, to be able to deliver two bouncing baby boys into this world. We all know that we have at hospitals some of the most terrible days of our lives, and we are surrounded by those caring individuals—doctors, nurses, health care professionals, support staff—who are there for us and for our families, and we must commend them for the good work that they do on our behalf.

1710

I am very happy that we have been able to increase funding for a CCAC for Perth county and also for London-Middlesex. I know that we have the opportunity now, finally, given the budget that was presented by the minister, to have "exceptional circumstances" money available for long-term-care facilities. That was not available; it is now. I know the good people of Milverton are working with me and Knollcrest on their redevelopment.

I look forward to continuing to urge the minister to grant exceptional circumstances. That community is in the process of raising—it's almost reached their personal target: in a community of about 1,500 people, some \$500,000 worth of donations, which I think is just superb, and the provincial government is looking at well in excess of \$3 million. We continue to work on that, because the throne speech has reminded us that these things are possible because of what we are doing.

I know that my own constituents have told me, "Keep up the good work, John. We need the provincial government to play its rightful role. We need you to stay focused over the next two years. We need you to continue to move forward on the things that are important to people: health care and education."

As I get an opportunity to go to schools, particularly in grade 5—you know, I enjoy going to grade 5. It's wonderful. I always show up unannounced. I say to the other members, if you ever want to have a great grade 5 visit—because, you know, they study government—the best thing to do is to go to the school and not let them know you're coming. They'll be glad to see you. Go to the principal first. You've got to go to the principal. All members want to go to the principal first and say, "I'm here today. Would you mind if I speak to the grade 5s?" It's always amazing when you go to the teacher who wasn't expecting to have someone of note to visit.

The key thing—I learned this from Mr. Conway, who was a great member. I'm sure the member for Whitby-Ajax would agree with me that Mr. Conway was a great member of this House. I learned from him the importance of allowing children to ask the questions that are important to them, not those scripted questions that the teacher would like them to give but rather the questions that are theirs.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Well, we could do that—scripted questions and scripted answers. No, we'll throw that away.

I know that in every publicly funded school there are lead literacy and numeracy teachers. I think that's remarkable. You cannot have that without peace and stability, in my opinion, in the education sector. I know that the good people of Quebec, the good people particularly in British Columbia, wish that their province was enjoying the labour peace that we are enjoying in this province as we move forward.

**Mr. Patten:** BC.

**Mr. Wilkinson:** Yes, in British Columbia it is quite a challenge.

I can say also that our ability to come up with our automotive strategy led to a magnificent day in Woodstock just the other day. What I heard about repeatedly from the people at Woodstock, particularly from Toyota, is the decision of the government to create the automotive strategy and to play its rightful part as we try to build those new jobs.

It's quite interesting, because I remember the mantra of a certain previous government that said, "No, we don't



participate in that. We just cut taxes," and not a single greenfield site was developed in this province for some 20 years.

Isn't it amazing? I don't think it's coincidental that when we changed the policy of the government and, under the leadership of the Honourable Joe Cordiano, we showed up at the table, our federal cousins did as well. We worked on a win-win-win solution. Particularly, the municipal leaders Mayor Harding and Warden Woolcott in Oxford did a wonderful job. That is all because of the throne speech, our record and what we plan to do for the next two years.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jim Flaherty (Whitby-Ajax):** I have a couple of minutes to speak about the throne speech. I listened with interest to the comments of the members opposite and the leader of the third party.

Overall, it's clear that the throne speech was thunderously boring. It was probably the most boring throne speech in the last 10 years or so, certainly the most boring throne speech I've heard over the past 10 years in the province of Ontario. So I applaud the Liberal government: If the idea was to bore the people of Ontario into ignoring the conduct of the Liberal government of Ontario, I think they may well have met with some success. I do hope that when the Lieutenant Governor was offered the job of Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario, he was forewarned that this type of extremely boring task of reading this text that lacked imagination or direction would be imposed on him by the Premier and by the members opposite.

If Ontario were in a situation today where we could do without a plan, where things were fine, where there were lots of jobs for people, where our industrial base was growing, where we weren't losing manufacturing jobs, where people felt that their incomes were keeping up with their bills—their insurance bills, their natural gas bills, their heating bills, the gas for their car, their municipal taxes, property taxes—if things were all fine, then boring would be good. But things are not all fine in the province of Ontario, and that's the problem.

The throne speech should have disclosed a plan to deal with electricity issues, to deal with the violent crime issues that we're facing, to deal with the garbage issue and, above all, to reduce the tax burden so that small business and medium-sized business in Ontario will have some incentive to create jobs. That's the crisis in this province. We are facing an economic decline. We are witnessing the economic decline of Ontario under the Liberal government.

**Mr. Marchese:** There is something the member for Whitby-Ajax said that I agree with, and that is that this particular throne speech was Olympically bad and, should they continue in this way, they should be eliminated. I believe that if we continue in this way, we'll have to get rid of these throne speeches.

When the member for Perth-Middlesex talks about staying focused, what he means is a do-nothing kind of throne speech: "Do nothing, stay away from trouble,

don't do anything that might alert the public to the promises we had made prior to 2003, that might remind them of all the promises we broke." That's what staying focused is: Don't promise anything, and don't do anything.

When the member for Brant talks about these apprenticeship programs and how proud he is, one of the things on which I attacked the minister in post-secondary education, in the briefings at estimates, was in fact the government's desire to give away public money, taxpayer money, to a company called Dell to give 500 call centre jobs to Ottawa. That company is going to get \$5,000 per person coming into that company; Three weeks' training and they're going to get three years of funding—\$5,000 a pop; 500 people. We're talking about Dell here; we're talking call centre. We're talking about individuals making \$8.95 an hour. We're talking of subsidizing a company to get a call centre in Ottawa, and we're going to give them millions of dollars, for what? It's a call centre. Three weeks' training and they're going to get three years' funding. That's what this apprenticeship program is all about. That's the innovation this government is talking about.

This is a do-nothing throne speech, and we've got to get rid of them if we continue this way.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It is indeed an opportunity, when I listen to my colleagues, my friend from Brant and my good friend from Perth-Middlesex, talk about what I thought was a fairly dynamic throne speech, laying out a very comprehensive plan for the province of Ontario in the next two years. I could see the enthusiasm on the face of Lieutenant Governor James K. Bartleman as he delivered those words to this assembly, because that throne speech talked about the future, the kinds of things that have been highlighted by the member for Brant. I had an opportunity to drive through Brant on the 403 a couple of weeks ago. You could see that industrial park booming with new jobs for that community. I had an opportunity to be in my friend's riding of Listowel for the International Plowing Match. You could see things that are growing substantially in Stratford, in the riding of Perth-Middlesex.

Ontario is on the move. We've never had such peace in our schools. Just a short time ago I was in the grade 5 class at Chemong school in my riding. You walk in there and you see teachers with smiles on their faces; you see students who are willing to learn, with class sizes capped. You see parents seeing, for the first time in eight plus five years—that's 13—that there is harmony and peace. There's an education environment that's conducive to positive learning. That's what we've brought to Ontario.

1720

The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities has embarked upon a plan to put \$6.5 billion into community colleges and universities—the first time in 40 years—to overhaul that system, to make sure that Ontario has the foundation, has the basics to advance economically to get that right, to make those investments that all people of Ontario will profit from.

We are going to address the dropout problem with a new program from the Minister of Education.

Taken altogether—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. We have time for one last question or comment.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** It is unfortunate that the mike for the member for Peterborough went dead at that very pivotal moment that he re-described the throne speech as being dynamic, that he reiterated what he said to start his two-minute address. But I can understand it, because I actually heard him say once that he considered the lullaby Rock-a-Bye Baby to be heavy-metal rock.

**Mr. Marchese:** He's easy to please.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** He is very, very easy to please, and his standards are somewhat different than others', certainly different from those of the member for Whitby-Ajax.

This was a vacuous, empty throne speech. There was nothing there but the opportunity for the Premier to bring out some pomp and ceremony, get some photo ops. But it really was the signal that this government, halfway through its four-year mandate, has totally run out of ideas and has run out of gas.

A couple of weeks ago I was at an energy conference over at Sutton Place. Everybody who is interested in energy and the effects we have was there. Perrin Beatty was there, and Duncan Hawthorne, people from OPG, the mining sector and the forestry sector. To a person, they all were so concerned about the effect of this government's energy policy on our economy.

The member from Brant talks about the jobs. The numbers, on the surface, are looking not too bad. But peel off the veneer, my dear friends, and you see where we are going; you see—

**Mr. Marchese:** The underbelly.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** —the underbelly. Thank you, Rosario.

This government is placing the health of this economy in severe jeopardy with its misguided and irresponsible energy policy. The future will not look bright in manufacturing in this province if this government does not wake up and smell the coffee.

**The Acting Speaker:** One of the government members has two minutes to reply. I recognize the member for Brant.

**Mr. Levac:** I thought that only the NDP believed the sky was falling, but now I guess that both opposition parties believe the sky is falling.

I'd like them to speak to the people who are going to get jobs in my riding and tell them that it's superficial. I want them to go and tell somebody working in a call centre that it's superficial. That's a job, and they're putting money on the table and food on the table by it. It's unfortunate that it's being characterized that way.

I want to thank the members from Whitby-Ajax, Trinity-Spadina, Peterborough and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke for participating in this and showing us exactly where they're coming from. But I'd also like to thank the member from Perth-Middlesex for joining me and com-

plimenting us on what we're trying to accomplish in moving this ship around.

I was going to talk about education for a moment. The quick comment I want to make about education is, let's remember that we're coming from eight years of "Some of my best friends are teachers but—bang—let's get those teachers. Some of my best friends are teachers, I'm married to a teacher, but—bang—let's really throw it in chaos." The chaos theory, I call it. "Create a lot of chaos and everybody will believe that there needs to be some kind of reform in the teaching profession."

We are putting peace back into the classroom so they can do their job. That's what it's all about: helping those kids.

Let me quote from the response to the throne speech by the leader of the official opposition. Get this—health care. Be very careful. It's my warning: Be very careful. Listen to this:

"Building a world-class health system, however, requires you to be bold"—uh-oh, cryptic. "There are a lot of entrenched interests in ... health care"—like the patients. "So we all sit and watch money wasted ... Soviet-style central command." There are some other cryptic ones—make no mistake: There are better ways of how we can entrench other people who are vision thinkers who can engage in this debate, vision thinkers, risk-takers, and they're vilified.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate on the throne speech?

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the debate. I have to indicate at the outset that I concur with the other opposition member, Mr. Rosario Marchese, Trinity-Spadina, and my colleagues as well in describing the throne speech. That seems to be a pretty widespread sentiment, in terms of reaction from the media and others following the throne speech—boring, dull, a big yawn.

There were some commentators the following day who indicated that this was a strategy, that the government wanted to keep things quiet and hopefully slip by the radar of the public with respect to the fact they don't really have a plan in so many areas that are of concern to the taxpayers and residents of this province. We've seen this over the past two-plus years now, where so many of their policy initiatives seem to have been drawn up in the back of a napkin, a quick reaction to something happening in the media. We saw that this week with the Attorney General, who is famous for this, with respect to his justice reform package that he is talking about, which came out of the blue, apparently in response to a Toronto Star series. That seems to be, disturbingly, the way in which this government has acted and clearly is going to continue to act. They are responding to pressure groups, to media groups, to donors from construction unions or from owners and operators of limousines that service Pearson airport.

There was some speculation that the resignation of the then Minister of Finance, Mr. Sorbara, overshadowed the throne speech, but I would say that a heavy rainstorm



would have overshadowed this uninspiring waste of a Lieutenant Governor's time.

I'm just going to take a few minutes. I could go on and on with respect to all sorts of initiatives that could have been mentioned, that should have been mentioned, but for obvious reasons, given the track record of this government, were not touched upon.

A big one that I think is of concern, not just to Ontarians but to Canadians, given what we've seen occurring in this government over the past two years, and of course at the federal level for some period of time, both Liberal governments, is integrity and honesty in government. We raise issues, and there is some criticism with respect to it from the government benches across the way, with holier-than-thou responses to questions by our leader, Mr. Tory, about the appropriateness of Mr. Sorbara staying in office over 18 or 19 months, when the original concerns were expressed.

One has to legitimately wonder about the rationale of leaving Mr. Sorbara in that critical portfolio when the Premier, and he has admitted as much, had no way of being certain whether or not Mr. Sorbara was the subject of a police investigation. We now know that he is, that a search warrant was issued to search the premises of his family company. He was specifically named in the search warrant. What did the Premier do in response to these concerns being expressed 18 or 19 months ago, in fact that the Ontario Securities Commission had launched an investigation? He removed the OSC responsibilities from the Minister of Finance. This after the minister himself had known about this investigation for two months without relaying that information to the Premier. That, to me, would have been grounds for dismissal by any other Premier. If you had a senior minister, especially in a finance portfolio, under investigation by the securities commission and failing to inform the Premier of that investigation for two months until it was becoming public, that alone should have been grounds for dismissal. But I think it's another indicator of the weakness of leadership with the current Liberal government.

1730

It seems to be a "hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil" approach, and clearly, when the Premier made the decision to leave this individual in charge of the finances of this province in saying, "I don't know of any police investigation," I think it's pretty clear there was a police investigation underway. There has been one underway for the past 18 or 19 months. That should be of concern to all of us, that this individual, regardless of what the ultimate outcome might be—and we don't want to prejudge that—but the fact that he was allowed to remain in office for 18 or 19 months when it appears clear at this point in time that he was under police investigation, I think, is most disturbing and, again, a clear reflection and indictment of the Premier, his lack of leadership and his inability to make some tough decisions.

I have a few more along that line. Mr. Sorbara is not alone. We had a situation involving the Minister of Transportation, Mr. Takhar, who is now under investi-

gation by the Integrity Commissioner on allegations, which have been supported and admitted to, to some degree, in the media and by the minister himself, with respect to his involvement with business operations, or at least with the head office of the business that he headed up and his wife now heads up. We know that when one is appointed to the executive council, they are required to place their business holdings in a blind trust. They are not to be involved in the day-to-day operations or decisions of that business and those business holdings.

Now we know that the minister was travelling back and forth to that business place—he says, to visit his wife. We know he was there for extended periods of time. We know that he even had political meetings in that office. We know that his chief financial officer was on the board and involved with the company. Yet those are the kinds of allegations, supported by a significant number of facts in the public domain, that the leader of the current government, Mr. McGuinty, when he was sitting on this side of the House, would have been ballistic about in terms of requiring—demanding—that any minister of the former government step aside until the air was cleared. There was no question about it, no grey area, when it came to Mr. McGuinty's demands for resignations by members of the former government.

I happened to be one of them, for a relatively minor incident, where he was certainly on his feet, along with other members of his caucus. We know, time after time after time, the demands for public inquiries and resignations that flowed from these benches. Now we've seen this totally different approach and the holier-than-thou reaction from the Liberal benches when we raise these issues. I would encourage the new members sitting on that side to go back and read some of the Hansards from the past few years when the Conservatives were in power in this province and look at the positions taken by them with respect to ministers of the crown. "Hypocrisy" is not a word that's permitted in debate in this House, Mr. Speaker, so I won't use it.

I have to mention another issue that was raised—several issues, really—related to fundraisers. We're talking about integrity and the failure to mention integrity in the throne speech. We know, on a number of occasions, the ones that are public knowledge, where the construction unions had a significant thank-you fundraiser and raised about a quarter of a million dollars for the Liberal Party. This was right in the middle of legislation in this House by the Minister of Labour, which was removing secret ballot votes for certification of unions in the construction sector. Here's a thank you, a \$250-million thank you, in the middle of legislation—unprecedented, in my history in this place. You could call it tollgating; you could call it a payoff. Whatever you want to call it, it reflects on the integrity of this government, and it reflects badly.

We also know that this is the same group of people who were involved in the working families—

**The Acting Speaker:** I would ask the member for Leeds–Grenville to withdraw his comments about the government.

**Mr. Runciman:** If I said anything unparliamentary, I will withdraw, with my apologies.

**The Acting Speaker:** You did, and I appreciate your withdrawal.

**Mr. Runciman:** This is the same organization that was a significant sponsor of the working families initiative against the former government and invested something in the neighbourhood of \$300,000 to run extremely critical ads of the former government.

We know there was a \$10,000-per-person fundraiser in the home of the former Minister of Finance's brother and allegations surrounding that that related to protection of land around the then-proposed greenbelt. Those are allegations that have never been answered appropriately.

We know that, again, the Minister of Transportation, Mr. Takhar, was bringing in legislation banning Toronto taxis from picking up fares at Pearson airport. We also know that those same limousine drivers, their organizations, raised approximately \$200,000 for the Liberal Party. Again, what does that say about the integrity of the Liberal government? They couldn't speak to that issue because it wouldn't stand the test of credibility, given their track record over the past two-plus years.

If they had wanted to, if they had a clean sheet to present to the public of Ontario, they could perhaps have announced a legislative requirement that political parties keep promises that get them elected. When we talk about integrity, the biggest one that shows continually on public polling is their failure to keep promises that put them in office—230 promises. We've counted 50 so far that have been broken. Of course, the most significant one was their tax promise, where Mr. McGuinty was featured in television advertising promising the people of Ontario that he would not increase their taxes.

Mr. McGuinty and others now argue that, "We had no choice. We had to do this." But they did have a choice. Another element of that promise was that if they felt, for financial or other reasons, that they had to bring in tax increases, they would go to the people; they would make their case before the people through a referendum. That's a key component of that promise which they fail to talk about when they discuss this issue.

Again, they failed to talk in specific terms about the economy. There were a number of references to the economy and economic growth, but I would suggest a great deal of that was bravado, smoke and mirrors. We hear certain pockets of Ontario are doing well, but we all know there's increasing uncertainty about the economic well-being of this province and certainly about the manufacturing base. We have had 42,000 manufacturing jobs lost over the past year. Those are the September statistics: year to year, 42,000 manufacturing jobs lost.

Certainly I know from my own area, my own region of the province, eastern Ontario, we are the recipients of those body blows. In Brockville we've lost SCI, Black and Decker, Phillips Cable. We've seen RCA move out

of Prescott. We've seen manufacturing jobs lost in Cardinal. We've recently seen the Nestlé food plant in Chesterville, which borders my riding, being announced as a closure.

What's happening, Mr. Speaker, as you know, is that many of these jobs are being replaced by significantly lower paid service jobs. We're becoming a service job economy. We may not see the impact of that over the next few years. We're still seeing a large growth in Brockville, for example, of the commercial sector. But I think, over time, that's going to have an impact on all Ontarians and our ability to maintain this healthy economy over the next 10, 15 or 20 years. Certainly in the small business sector we're seeing increased taxes, we've seen increased regulation and energy costs—again, none of these referenced in terms of providing assistance through the throne speech—WSIB premiums—or labour legislation.

1740

The third point that I want to address quickly is agriculture—virtually ignored. Mr. Speaker, I know that you have an agricultural component in your riding. We know how the farming community is suffering. And it's not just farmers; it's the people who live and work in the agricultural community as well.

I had the opportunity, along with a federal member and some municipal officials, on the Thanksgiving weekend, of meeting with Grenville OFA folks and touring, meeting cash croppers, feed and fertilizer dealers, equipment dealers—the whole range of people who are impacted by what is happening in rural Ontario, and who are virtually ignored. Alex McGregor, who is a beef farmer—and I think he's also involved in dairy operations now—his net income from 1997 to 2004, down 85.5%. That's due to higher input costs and lower returns on sales.

Mr. Speaker, we have low commodity prices, as you know, and low crop prices for corn, beans and wheat. There's a whole range of very serious problems, and they are not getting support from the Liberal provincial government. In fact, they witnessed a very significant cut in the ministry budget in the past budget. They are in serious concern, and I would suggest that this Toronto-centric government provide time for urban area members to spend a day or so out in rural Ontario with the farmers, with the cash crop folks, with the implement dealers. Get a better understanding. Get some manure on your shoes. Get out there and walk around and realize the challenges that these people are facing and that you are not addressing in any way, shape or form.

I had a letter from a young couple, Jeff Gatcke and Corinna Smith-Gatcke—it's tough for young couples to get into farming—talking about the fact that they want to grow their business. They want to be in farming. These are young people who grew up on farms and they want to stay in farming. They love farming.

"As grain and oilseed producers, our sector requires long-term solutions to provide stability. Governments at all levels must support the idea of a level playing field, as



Ontario farmers produce farm products at the local level but the prices paid for our products are influenced by world trade issues. Ontario must prove that OMAFRA is a lead ministry and important to their government by increasing the budget, not cutting it, and providing stable programs to help farmers arrange financing and enable young farmers to enter the business of agriculture."

That's not happening with this government, and it virtually ignored the sector in the speech from the throne.

Some local issues, quickly: We are seeing some negative impacts in the health care sector. The Brockville General Hospital, which had a \$37-million expansion under the former government, is now being forced by the current Liberal government to close beds. We're closing a complete ward in the Brockville General Hospital, closing down the lab, restricting operating room time. They are continuing to operate a CAT scan, for which they get no funding from the province, on monies that are donated to the hospital. That's the sort of thing that's happening.

We've lost the walk-in clinic. This is in Brockville. I understand that the walk-in clinic in Prescott is now under threat. This is overwhelming the Brockville General emergency room. This, all in the wake of a record tax increase by the Liberal government to supposedly improve health care in the province, at the same time removing physio, eye exams and chiropractic care from OHIP coverage. That's the sort of thing that's happening.

Nursing homes: I've been in contact with Sherwood Park nursing home. Again, nursing homes are under significant pressure. They had promises from this government which are simply not happening. Stress, frustration and discouragement: The government claims "to have created 2,000 new positions in long-term care when in fact, most of us have struggled to retain what we have and are, in fact, planning to cut ... the few health care aide" workers that we have. That's the reality and speaks to the honesty of the current government. There are so many people, so many challenges, and I can't get into all of them with the limited time that I have, but I very much appreciate the opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Marchese:** I know the member from Leeds-Grenville spent a considerable amount of time focusing on the former Treasurer. My personal view on that is that there's an investigation and we should let that go through the due process. My view is that we need to defeat governments based on their ideas, and I hope that we will be able to do that in our time here. I will be speaking in about six or seven minutes, and I will outline some of the government's ideas, or lack of them. That's what I will do.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** It was difficult to sit through the last diatribe by the opposition on integrity. We know that they treated the hydro trough like their own and would not let the auditor near. We've opened up all spending to the Auditor General. They hid \$5.6 million of deficit, of debt. The throne speech is

building on the first two years of productive government under the Liberals.

In Ottawa, we have 11,000 more MRI exams, thanks to the good work being done in health. That's a 50% increase. We still have long wait times. The Baird-Sterling government left us 14th out of 14—the longest wait times in all of the province. That is being repaired every week by this government. Teachers tell us they have more resources. They certainly have the respect from our government. There is peace in our schools and we are getting a lot done. Some \$6.2 billion for post-secondary education, an area that was, I think, 48th out of 50; something like that. We're just ahead of Mississippi in support for post-secondary education; \$6.2 billion will make a big difference in post-secondary education in Ontario. So under health, education and economic prosperity, this government is moving Ontario forward. We're on the right track, and the throne speech laid the road for the next two years.

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):**

I'm certainly pleased to provide my comments with respect to the speech made by the honourable member from Leeds-Grenville. Certainly, he has set out very clearly that the Liberal government really does not have a plan. If the speech from the throne is a road, it's a road to nowhere, because quite frankly, they do not have a clear understanding of where they're trying to take this province.

There are some very serious issues that we're facing as a province in our economy. At this crucial time, I think it's proper for the member to raise the issues in terms of finance and having a steady hand in terms of how to deal with this. Quite frankly, the way they've been handling the economy has a lot of people concerned. Gas rates, electricity rates and now natural gas rates are all going up, putting pressure on disposable income and certainly putting pressure on keeping this economy going for them.

I just want to make a few comments also in terms of some of the work that I've been dealing with in terms of my riding. GO Transit is something that has been very important that I have been working on for many years. Barrie hasn't had GO Transit for over 15 years. I'm hopeful, having met with the Ministry of Transportation, that we're going to see GO Transit in the spring of 2006. All we are waiting for right now, apart from the agreement on the financial part of the deal, is that the federal government hasn't provided an environmental approval at this stage. We're waiting on the federal government. It may not happen until well into 2006, so for GO Transit we're waiting on the federal government.

**1750**

I am also pleased to hear today that RVH is going to be getting a stroke recovery clinic. Certainly, that will help my constituents, and we're very pleased, having worked very hard to get the cancer care announcement and the construction for RVH and Southlake. I'm very proud of that.

**Mr. Levac:** I appreciate the opportunity to engage in the two-minuters.

I want to pick up on something I left off with a while ago, quoting Mr. Tory's comments about the throne speech. Here's his comment: "There are a lot of entrenched interests in the health care debate and a lot of political pressure not to act at all, just to sort of leave things as they are and keep shovelling more money into it and hope for the best." But he didn't acknowledge Bill 8 from the Minister of Health. What he didn't acknowledge was the fact that we passed legislation that is now going to make it transparent and accountable, and the member from Ottawa made that reference to make sure everybody knows we're looking at every single area of government spending to be transparent and auditable by the Auditor General. So I think it's important for us to understand that he's yesterday, and we're talking about today and tomorrow.

Here's the other question he asked: "... why don't we ask the front-line workers for the suggestions they have on how the health care system could be run better?" Where have you been, Mr. Tory? We've done that. When we first were elected, for the first time ever, we asked all the front-line workers from all the ministries, "Where can you help us?" There was something like \$600,000 in savings implemented immediately. So yes, we've been doing that.

Here's one I want to quote that has to ring alarm bells severely: "If there were such an open discussion, I would ask about the possible role of risk-takers and innovators and idea people and their money in the current health care system, because we need them and their ideas at work, investing and innovating within a universal, single-payer system." That is a long-winded way of saying we want those guys to come in from the private sector to suck us dry. We have got to be careful of that. Let's stop using the cryptic language and come back and tell us what it is you want to do to our health care system. Don't play with words like that; be up front and tell us exactly what it is you've got planned, Mr. Tory. I challenge you to do that for us so that we can make some choices.

**The Acting Speaker:** I would like to remind all members that they should refer to each other by their riding names, not by their last names.

I will now turn to the member for Leeds-Grenville; he has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Runciman:** I thank the members who participated. The member for Trinity-Spadina said I focused on the former finance minister. I did not. I focused on the leadership or lack of leadership by Mr. McGuinty in terms of his ethical standards when he was in opposition versus now that he's the leader of this province.

The member for Brant talks about transparency. That's a phony point to make. Talk to the chiefs of police here today, I would suggest to the member, with respect to transparency and the development of this criminal case management process that they've now developed without talking to the chiefs of police in Ontario; justice modernization, shutting them out.

The people of Ontario know there were 230 promises made by the Liberal Party when they were running for

office. We have counted at least 50 of them broken up to this point in time. When public polling is done, people, unprompted, describe the Premier with one word, which I will not use because we all know what that word is. That's unprompted. They can try to shake that but it's firmly implanted in the minds of people in this province, who pay attention to what's going on.

They talk about the deficit. That's another phony argument. Half of that fiscal year there were challenges. We know there were challenges. What did they do? They went on a spending spree for the six months of that fiscal year to run up the deficit.

Nursing homes: We know how they're short-changing nursing homes, and I've quoted from one nursing home in my riding. Hiring 8,000 nurses—another promise they made. What have they done? They've fired 1,000 nurses, with something like a \$91-million severance cost associated with that.

We heard them talking about how they condemned P3 hospitals when they were in opposition. What do they do when they get into government? They adopt the P3 policy but they change the name.

They're phony in capital letters.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Marchese:** It's a pleasure to have this opportunity to speak to the throne speech. We've got five minutes, but we'll pick it up the next day, don't you worry, member for Brant.

I want to welcome people to this political forum. It's been a long, long time that you haven't been able to see us, but here we are back again, live, at five to 6. I want to pick up immediately on the throne speech and how Olympically boring and—what else?—bad it was, so bad and so intentionally boring it was that the design of it suggests one thing: They don't want to get into trouble. They don't want to say anything or do anything that could get them into trouble. That's what this budget is all about.

To pick up from what the member from Whitby-Ajax just said so that I don't lose track of it—because the member from Brant stands up and talks with a great deal of vigour and accuses the Tories of having an agenda that benefits the private sector but not the Liberals. God, no, not them. He says it with verve and vigour and passion and alerts the public to the threat of the Tories and the private sector and their desire to privatize out. And when it comes to the Liberals, oh, no, not the Liberals. They wouldn't do that.

I remind you, Speaker, for your pleasure, that the McGuinty government and the Liberals, when they were in opposition, attacked P3s—private-public partnerships—that the Liberals, through McGuinty, said would never happen under a Liberal government. And what did they do? They renamed it. So that they could not be accused of doing what the Tories did, they simply renamed it.

It's now called "alternative financing and procurement," a fancy name for P3s—public-private partnerships. You'll hear denials from all the Liberals across the way and Liberals beside me. You'll hear denials and



protestations to the contrary, and you will have them stand up and either not make any reference to the alternative financing and procurement or, if they do, they'll say, "Oh, no, it's not P3s because, you see, Liberals are not capable of serving the interests of the private sector in order to give them a little extra pecunia, because, you see, those hungry people"—

**Mr. Leal:** Rosario, you were the architect of the 407.

**Mr. Marchese:** Oh, but the Liberals learned nothing from us, it seemed. The Liberals have learned nothing from the—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Marchese:** But if you make reference to it, surely you were good learners. You had the example of the P3s. McGuinty said, "We wouldn't do it," and then you jumped, head, two feet in, with your hands, swimming right into that dirty, dirty private water. You say, "Oh, no, not us; only the Tories—oh, and the NDP. But Lib-

erals are incapable of doing anything that would benefit the private sector—incapable." They are so deep in the doo-doo of private 3s under the so-called alternative financing and procurement that they cannot escape—they cannot, irrespective, notwithstanding, all the protestations from all these fine people across the way and beside me.

I'll come back to this when I have time. Oh, I'm running out of time. You see, time is running out so quickly. All right, Speaker. Thank you. I'll come back to this, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** You made a good point, and it's a good time to wind it up. We'll look forward to the remaining part of your speech on the throne speech.

Now this House stands adjourned until 6:45 p.m. later on this evening.

*The House adjourned at 1758.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

# CONTENTS

Tuesday 18 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Earthquake in South Asia</b>	
Mr. Klees .....	101
<b>Golden Horseshoe Marathon</b>	
Ms. Marsales .....	101
<b>Jennifer Teague</b>	
Mr. Baird .....	101
<b>Kawartha Choice Farmland Foods</b>	
Mr. Leal .....	102
<b>Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police</b>	
Mr. Dunlop .....	102
<b>Support for South Asian community</b>	
Ms. Horwath .....	102
<b>School nutrition programs</b>	
Mr. Racco .....	103
<b>Research and innovation</b>	
Mr. Fonseca .....	103
<b>Women Moving Forward initiative</b>	
Mr. Sergio .....	103

## FIRST READINGS

<b>Children's Law Reform Amendment Act, 2005, Bill 8, Mr. Craitor</b>	
Agreed to .....	104
Mr. Craitor .....	104
<b>University of St. Michael's College Act, 2005, Bill Pr13, Mr. Fonseca</b>	
Agreed to .....	104
<b>Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies Act, 2005, Bill Pr21, Mr. Fonseca</b>	
Agreed to .....	104

## MOTIONS

<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley .....	104
Agreed to .....	104

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Stroke care system</b>	
Mr. Smitherman .....	105
Mrs. Witmer .....	106
Ms. Martel .....	106
<b>Small business</b>	
Mr. Cordiano .....	105
Mr. Chudleigh .....	106
Ms. Horwath .....	107

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Parole system</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	109
Mr. Kwinter .....	109, 117
Mr. Kormos .....	117
<b>Wait times</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	110
Mr. Smitherman .....	110
<b>Property taxation</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	111
Mr. Duncan .....	111
<b>Electricity supply</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	112
Mrs. Cansfield .....	112
<b>Greenbelt advertising</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	113
Mr. Bradley .....	113
<b>Waste disposal</b>	
Ms. Churley .....	113
Mr. Wilkinson .....	113, 115
Ms. Scott .....	115
<b>Family health teams</b>	
Mr. Craitor .....	114
Mr. Smitherman .....	114
<b>Illegal taxi operators</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	115
Mr. Takhar .....	115, 116
Mr. O'Toole .....	116
<b>Renewable fuels</b>	
Mr. Oraziotti .....	116
Mr. Ramsay .....	116
<b>Federal-provincial fiscal policies</b>	
Ms. Smith .....	117
Mrs. Bountrogianni .....	117
<b>Infectious disease control</b>	
Mr. Barrett .....	118
Mrs. Dombrowsky .....	118
<b>National child benefit supplement</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	118
Ms. Pupatello .....	118

## PETITIONS

<b>Property taxation</b>	
Mr. O'Toole .....	119
<b>Municipal restructuring</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	119
Ms. Horwath .....	120
Mr. Marchese .....	121
<b>Credit Valley Hospital</b>	
Mr. Delaney .....	119
<b>Services for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Hardeman .....	120

## Macular degeneration

Mr. Craitor .....	120
<b>Autism treatment</b>	
Mr. Klees .....	120
<b>Regional centres for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Klees .....	121
<b>Fallsview Casino</b>	
Mr. Craitor .....	121
<b>Hospital services</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	121

## GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

<b>Throne speech debate, government order number 1, Mr. Crozier</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	122
Mr. Levac .....	129, 134, 137
Mr. Wilkinson .....	131
Mr. Flaherty .....	133
Mr. Marchese .....	133, 137, 138
Mr. Leal .....	133
Mr. Yakabuski .....	134
Mr. Runciman .....	134, 138
Mr. McNeely .....	137
Mr. Tascona .....	137
Debate deemed adjourned .....	139

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Persons Day

Ms. Pupatello .....	107
Mrs. Witmer .....	108
Ms. Churley .....	109

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mardi 18 octobre 2005

## PREMIÈRE LECTURE

<b>Loi de 2005 modifiant la Loi portant réforme du droit de l'enfance, projet de loi 8, M. Craitor</b>	
Adoptée .....	104





No. 5B

N° 5B

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 18 October 2005**

**Mardi 18 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 18 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 18 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FORFEITED PROPERTY MANAGEMENT STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE L'EXÉCUTION DE LA LOI ET L'ADMINISTRATION DES BIENS CONFISQUÉS

Mr. Kwinter moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 128, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to enforcement powers, penalties and the management of property forfeited, or that may be forfeited, to the Crown in right of Ontario as a result of organized crime, marijuana growing and other unlawful activities / Projet de loi 128, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne les pouvoirs d'exécution, les pénalités et l'administration des biens confisqués ou pouvant être confisqués au profit de la Couronne du chef de l'Ontario par suite d'activités de crime organisé et de culture de marijuana ainsi que d'autres activités illégales.

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I'm pleased to rise today in support of this important legislation that is intended to combat the threat posed by marijuana grow operations to the safety of our communities. These illegal operations threaten the health, safety and economy of Ontario's communities.

The Ontario government has a plan to strengthen our province by strengthening our most important advantage—our people. Fighting marijuana grow-ops and the hazards they pose to our communities helps strengthen Ontario. We are committed to giving its partners in the fight against marijuana grow-ops the tools and resources they need to fight this increasing problem.

This legislation is the first step in our fight against grow-ops. We're taking action because we all know that the danger keeps growing. The negative impact of these illegal operations is felt in the economic area.

Documents prepared for the Green Tide Summit of 2004 indicate that the estimated total retail value of marijuana grown in Ontario each year could be as high as \$5 billion. That's not "million" but "billion." This underground illegal economy undermines many sectors of the

legitimate economy by adding costs to ordinary Ontarians and businesses. Insurance and electric costs, for example, are all impacted by marijuana grow-ops. The Green Tide report published by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the OACP—I'm delighted to say that today was their lobby day and we just came from a reception hosted by them. They do a wonderful job for the citizens of Ontario. This report, which was commissioned in the fall of 2003, states that about \$80 million in electricity is stolen by illegal grow operators every year. That represents between \$50 and \$200 added to every Ontario homeowner's electricity bill each year. These statistics show that we need to take the fight to those who profit from this illegal activity.

The threat to our communities and first responders is also very real. Organized crime uses intimidation and violence to protect this illegal industry. Emergency personnel, firefighters and police officers, have had to deal with booby traps, the danger of electrocution and other hazards when entering illegal grow-ops.

Our proposed legislation, Bill 128, amends the Electricity Act to give electricity distribution companies the authority to cut power without notice to any property where they believe power usage threatens public or the integrity of the distribution grid.

1850

We need to hit those who operate grow-ops where it hurts, and that's in their pockets. Marijuana grow-ops are a profitable business and therefore are attractive to gangs and organized crime. We know the activities of those who operate and benefit from marijuana grow-ops are not limited to basements and cellars but also to industrial buildings. They are in every part of our cities and rural areas. The threat they pose affects nearly everyone. In 2002, 17% of schools in York, Peel and Waterloo were located within 500 metres of a marijuana grow-op.

This threat has many aspects. Law enforcement officials indicate that a majority of the marijuana harvested in Canada is exported to the United States in exchange for guns and other drugs such as cocaine. Events in Toronto in the last few months indicate the need for the government to take action to limit the flow of illegal guns into our province. Any measure we take to restrict this flow of illegal firearms will have a positive result.

We have worked closely with our municipal, police and other partners to take action against marijuana grow-ops and have come up with Bill 128. We want to give our partners all necessary support in their ongoing war

against those who operate grow-ops. In 2001, officers from the Toronto Police Service dismantled 33 indoor marijuana grow operations. That was in 2001. In 2003, that number rose to 140. In 2004, they dismantled more than 250 indoor operations, with the seized marijuana plants having a street value of more than \$83.2 million. That's a lot of money taken out of the hands of criminals, but we need to pursue this war with all our might. To win this fight we will need the help of all of our partners.

I'm pleased to say we have reached a broad consensus on the positive impact of Bill 128 in this battle against grow-ops. The bill is a result of extensive consultation with police, municipalities, fire prevention officials, electrical utilities and representatives from the banking and real estate sectors. The Green Tide Summit and the Green Tide action group that followed indicate our willingness to listen to our partners.

Here is what Roger Anderson, the president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, said: "The bill and its amendments will help municipal governments, their inspectors, law enforcement and others better tackle grow operations in our communities."

The McGuinty government is committed to a sustained and coordinated campaign to combat grow-ops, and this legislation is a first step. The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, the Police Association of Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario are just a few of the groups that support this bill and the larger campaign to dismantle grow-ops.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police is a key ally in this fight. The association played a very important role in helping us put together the Green Tide Summit of 2004. Here's what its former president, Chief Paul Hamelin, who is in the building tonight, said when we introduced Bill 128: "The Green Tide Summit succeeded in raising public awareness to the serious threats posed by grow-ops, which are largely controlled by organized crime. We are pleased that progress is being made in controlling this menace to our communities."

The same spirit of co-operation was reflected by the comments of the senior Ontario Provincial Police officer at the same time. Here's what Detective Chief Superintendent Frank Ryder said: "This is a fight the police can't battle alone. With a concerted effort by all our stakeholders, our neighbourhoods and communities will be safer places to live."

We've answered this call for a common front. I was heartened to see this House unanimously pass this bill at second reading. It shows the commitment of members on both sides of the House to protecting our communities from the threats posed by marijuana grow operations. The McGuinty government takes these threats very seriously. I ask this House to continue its support for this important piece of legislation as a step in the fight against marijuana grow operations and as another step to ensure safer, stronger and more prosperous communities for all Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments. I'm sorry, I would ask the Minister of

Community Safety if he intended to share his time with another member, because I didn't hear him say that. Perhaps I missed it.

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** My parliamentary assistant will be joining me in this presentation.

**The Acting Speaker:** Now that that's clear, I recognize the member for Guelph-Wellington.

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph-Wellington):** I would like to thank Minister Kwinter for giving us an overview of the problem created by marijuana grow operations in our province. I think it's also important to note the broad coalition that is being put together to combat this public safety hazard.

I'd like to take a few moments to talk about some of the key aspects of our proposed legislation. When proclaimed, the Law Enforcement and Forfeited Property Management Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, will help us deal with the marijuana grow operations that often put entire neighbourhoods at risk. The act is the first step in a comprehensive province-wide strategy to combat the threat to community safety posed by illegal marijuana grow operations. Each measure of Bill 128 targets a specific threat and provides our policing, municipal and other partners with a concrete remedy.

Property damage caused by marijuana grow-ops threatens residents and potential buyers. First is the need for increased building inspections of dwellings where a grow-op was located. Properties used for marijuana grow-ops often suffer significant damage caused by illegal structural modifications and by dangerous wiring that bypasses electrical panels. These modifications represent a serious risk of fire to the building where there's a grow-op, and the entire neighbourhood as well. Furthermore, the humidity created by the way marijuana is grown leads to mould—a serious health threat to residents and other building users. In some cases building owners have made cosmetic repairs, and purchasers are unaware of the health and safety risks associated with former grow-ops in buildings they have just purchased.

These risks to human health and buildings must be addressed. Our proposed legislation would require municipal officials to inspect a property after being notified by police that it had been used as a marijuana grow operation. If municipal officials determine the property to be unsafe, they would order remedial work to make the building safe. This is one way we can help ensure the safety and health of Ontario residents.

I briefly alluded to the risk of potential fire that could result from marijuana grow-ops. Because of illegal modifications to the structure and wiring, the likelihood of fire in a dwelling used to grow marijuana can be 40 times greater than the likelihood of fire in a typical private house in Ontario. And it's not just the residents of the grow-op who are at risk; other residents in the building and in nearby dwellings are also at risk. This legislation would amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, doubling the penalties for violation of the act or its regulations, including the Ontario fire code.



With this new legislation we are also protecting the power supply with changes to the Electricity Act, 1998. The amendments will give electricity distribution companies the authority to cut the supply of electricity without notice to any property when they believe there is a threat to public safety or to the reliability of the distribution system. These amendments will give us more tools in the war against grow-ops. But we also need the help of our federal counterparts.

1900

I join the policing community in calling for tougher sentences as a deterrent for those who may consider operating a grow-op. This activity is a high-profit, low-risk proposition right now. Only one third of sentences involve incarceration, and for those who do go to jail, the average sentence is only 145 days—less than five months. Clearly, our federal colleagues must do their part and provide for tougher sentences. The existing sentences are not a strong enough deterrent when we know the average grow-op can bring in \$600,000 a year. The grow-ops located in many of our communities operate as industries with three or four annual harvests, where each mature plant brings in a profit of \$1,000.

Crime should not pay. So we included amendments to the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, doubling the penalties for violations of the act or its regulations, including the Ontario fire code. Violators can now be punished, if the act is passed, with fines of up to \$50,000—\$100,000 for corporations—or one year in jail, or both.

In the same vein, there are amendments to three different acts to allow the government to manage and dispose of assets forfeited to the crown as a result of court proceedings—assets such as real estate, cars and other equipment. The legislation also provides for a director of asset management to manage and dispose of assets held by or forfeited to the crown. The money forfeited under the Criminal Code could then be used for crime prevention, law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice.

Bill 128 would raise the cost of doing business for criminals by also enabling the provincial government to better manage and dispose of assets seized under a civil order. This legislation will make it easier for police and the justice community to turn seized assets and proceeds of crime into tools to help them fight marijuana grow-ops and other criminal activities. Our proposed legislation tackles many of the issues created by marijuana grow-ops. We will continue to work with our police and municipal partners to find new ways to stop the spread of this hazard to public safety.

Bill 128 represents a strong weapon in the campaign against grow-ops. We should also look at this bill in terms of protecting many children and families in our community. Grow-ops are not benign operations. The potential for abuse of children exists in many of the grow-ops. Organized crime often uses children and families as crop-sitters to make it appear to the neighbours that it is just another family residence. I consider this to

be a form of child abuse because of the medical risks caused by the presence of mould, chemicals, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide.

Bill 128 addresses many of the issues raised at the Green Tide Summit last year. The summit brought together, for the first time ever, representatives from the various levels of government, police services, public utilities and the private sector to seek solutions to the problem of grow-ops. The summit recommended forming the Green Tide action group to ensure that we are continually working to find ways to solve the problem by developing new protocols for interaction between the police and municipal building departments. Bill 128 is one of the accomplishments of this collaboration.

I call on my colleagues in the House to support this legislation and help us lead this fight to keep our communities safe and prosperous.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound–Muskoka):** I have listened carefully to the minister and the member for Guelph–Wellington speaking about Bill 128. I think it's safe to say that the official opposition will be supporting this bill when it comes to a vote after third reading, although of course we'll be listening to hear what our critic, Mr. Dunlop, will be saying when he has an opportunity to speak for a full hour on this bill.

I think it's a baby step forward, but there are some big holes in terms of getting tougher on crime. What about crystal meth? What about crack? Today, we had the chiefs of police here lobbying at Queen's Park. They wouldn't be here lobbying if everything was just fine in this area.

I have to remind the government that in the 2003 election, part of their election platform was dealing with hiring more police officers.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Miller:** Yes, but how long ago was that? That was October 2003. That's over two years ago. How long does it take you to start hiring police officers? You said, 1,000 police officers. How many have you hired now? I heard our leader asking you, "How many have you hired?" None, as far as I know, is the correct number for how many new police officers you've hired. You said you were going to hire 1,000. You've hired zero to this point. We've had, with all seriousness, a very bad year here, particularly in the Toronto area. It's time this government got serious and started hiring those new police officers and getting them into uniform and doing their job to make our city of Toronto and the province of Ontario a safer place.

We'll be listening carefully to hear what Mr. Dunlop says in the next hour, when he has time to speak, but I think we will probably be supporting this bill.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I'm going to save my comments about the parliamentary assistant for around an hour and 10 minutes from now, when I have the opportunity on behalf of the New Democratic Party here at Queen's Park to do the so-called leadoff comments. Here we are on third reading of this Bill 128.

I will similarly save my observations about Mr. Bradley until I have that one-hour time slot available to me to address Bill 128.

I'm going to be listening very carefully to the member from Simcoe North, Mr. Dunlop. If folks are watching up around Penetanguishene way, I would hope that you would call Mr. Dunlop's home, call his family members, call his folks, his in-laws, and encourage them—not encourage them; exhort them, and not just exhort them, but demand that they tune their television sets to the legislative channel, because Garfield Dunlop's going to be on for an hour on Bill 128 and he's going to tear a strip off this government, let me tell you. There is going to be a scathing attack on the minister and the Liberal government and its lack of leadership, the fact that as of today, in the year 2005, there are fewer police officers per capita in the province of Ontario than there were 10 years ago. That is a shame. Ms. Sandals talks about busting grow-ops, a fine idea. Where are the cops—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West):** It's always a pleasure to follow the member from Niagara Centre.

I come from the safest part of the safest city in the safest country on earth. I will say about the member for Simcoe North that I can't imagine him taking a strip off of us. He's voting for this bill. This is a great bill. This bill is about leadership. This bill shows leadership. The hazards posed by grow-ops were those posed by hazardous chemicals or industrial wastes. We'd have been active years ago. That's why we're here now. This bill shows the government's leadership, shows that we're serious about eradicating marijuana grow-ops that support organized crime, shows that we're serious in continuing to work with our police forces and all of the other partners and stakeholders in law enforcement to make this a safer province to work in.

This is a good bill. This is about fighting crime in our communities. This is a bill to keep houses from burning down because people have been rewiring them.

In my closing moments here, I also would like to stretch this two-minuter and recognize in the east members' gallery four guests from the Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association. I'd like the members present to join me in welcoming Michele Carrick, Penny White, Catherine Grater and Gina Vasiliadis. They've been holding a reception downstairs. We welcome them here at Queen's Park. They join us in expressing our support for the leadership this government is showing.

1910

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I appreciate the comments that have been made so far this evening on this bill, and I look forward to my opportunity to do our leadoff on third reading debate in the next few minutes. I can tell you that, as my colleague Norm Miller, the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka, has mentioned, our party will be supporting this piece of legislation. However, we do have some issues around community safety and where the government stands on community

safety. I will bring, I think, a number of fairly aggressive points forward tonight as we try to debate this bill. I'm not going to spend my whole comment period on this, but I want to say at the outset that our caucus will be supporting this legislation. I look forward to my opportunity to speak in just a couple of minutes.

**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time available for questions and comments. One of the government members has two minutes to reply.

**Mrs. Sandals:** I'm very pleased to hear that our colleagues in the Conservative caucus will be supporting our bill to deal with grow-ops. That is indeed appreciated. We appreciate your support because we believe this is something where all of us have to work together. This is not just a policing issue; it's a community issue. As we've heard, this can have an impact on families who are hired to be house-sitters; it can have an impact on neighbourhoods; it can have an impact on home buyers. The mould creates tremendous health issues. Grow-ops are not a benign activity. As such, we need to deal with them.

What we hear from our police forces is that the proceeds of crime, the proceeds from grow-ops are most normally used for importation of guns, because most of the marijuana that is grown in Ontario is exported to the US. Payment often comes in the form of illegal guns being imported into Ontario. So dealing with grow-ops is not just an issue of the negative effects of the grow-ops in and of themselves; it is also related to the tremendous problems of guns in the community. If we can shut down the importation of illegal guns, we can have an impact on the issue of violence in the community, as well as simply the issue of houses that are potential fire traps, potential health traps.

I hope that all three parties will, in the end, vote for this, and I thank all my colleagues for their comments.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Dunlop:** I'm very pleased tonight to be able to lead off our party's third reading debate on Bill 128, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to enforcement powers, penalties and the management of property forfeited, or that may be forfeited, to the Crown in right of Ontario as a result of organized crime, marijuana growing and other unlawful activities.

First of all, I want to congratulate the government for bringing this forward. It's a bill because of the Green Tide Summit, of course.

There are a number of people I want to acknowledge in the House tonight. I also want to congratulate the Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association for their reception here this evening. I know it's their lobby day as well. Penny, Michele, Catherine and Gina, it's good to see you in the House this evening. I know that Mr. Delaney is up there telling you what a great guy he is in his riding. I can tell you that we were pleased to meet you downstairs and hope that you've had a rewarding day.

As you know, the hygienists are here today and they want a particular piece of legislation passed. They have done a remarkable job over the last few years of bringing



their concerns forward. I congratulate the Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association. I have told them up front and I'm telling you in the House tonight that if that bill comes forward again and if we ever get a chance to actually debate it in the House, I will be supporting that bill. I just want to let you know that. I'm not sure what everybody else in the House is going to do, but I do want you to know that.

I also want to acknowledge in the House tonight a friend of mine, a person who has worked here in the House before. This young lady's name is Georgina Blanas. She has political ambitions. She is a business lady. I asked her to come in this evening to meet a few people in the provincial Legislature, to meet some of the police officers, some of the dental hygienists, and just get an overall feeling for the kind of people we represent here in the province of Ontario through our lobbying day. So Georgina, congratulations. It's been a pleasure to have you here this evening.

She also is a young entrepreneur. She has a business in my riding. It's called Neptune's Bistro, up in Lagoon City. She's doing very well at a remarkable business on the beautiful shores of the best riding in Ontario, the riding of Simcoe North, at Lagoon City. I know that will probably upset our chief opposition whip. He believes he has the best riding in Ontario, but we can fight about that at another time because we both represent beautiful parts of this wonderful province.

I also want to say it's been a remarkable day in the provincial Legislature today, having the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police on hand for their annual lobby day. We heard some good comments. I counted up and I think something like 20 elected members here have met with the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. We've received some fine comment. I just want to thank them once again for the great work they do here in Ontario.

Many times in this House we sit and complain about what we have in Ontario, whether it's our health care, our education, our roads or whatever, but the bottom line is that we do live in one wonderful part of the world. We are so fortunate here. When you look at some of the tragedies that have happened throughout the world, particularly in the last year, we are so fortunate here. Yes, we do complain, we do find fault with a lot of different areas of government, no matter what level of government we're at, but in the end, we live in a beautiful part of the province, and our job as politicians and parliamentarians is to make it even better for future generations.

Bill 128: Mr. Kormos led everyone to believe that this was going to be an exciting debate tonight, when in fact we have a time of one hour in our leadoffs to debate this. There are a number of things I wanted to put on the record that may not be on the record with the government but certainly are in the bill. For example, I wanted to read into the record the explanatory notes and some of the amendments we've made to the bill, and then make comments on a lot of the other issues that we as politicians, we as the opposition, criticize the government for on behalf of community safety.

The explanatory notes: If I'm reading in any of the particular pieces of legislation, I like to read in the explanatory notes, to know that I have at least put those all on the record in Hansard. On Bill 128, it actually says as follows:

#### 1920

"The bill amends seven different acts in relation to law enforcement matters. It increases enforcement powers in respect of building, electrical and fire safety matters and confirms municipal enforcement powers. It increases the penalties for building, electrical and fire safety offences. It expands the crown's powers to deal with property that is forfeited to it, as a result of unlawful activities, by court order. It also expands the powers of the crown, or another person assigned by the court, to deal with property that may be forfeited pending a final determination by the court.

"A more detailed description of the amendments to each act is set out below."

Mr. Speaker, the one thing about this act is that it has impacted a number of other existing acts in the Legislature.

First of all, the Building Code Act, 1992:

"Under the current act, an inspector may inspect a building to determine if it is unsafe and, if he or she finds that it is unsafe, may issue an order setting out the remedial steps to be taken in order to make it safe. The act is amended to require an inspector to inspect a building if advised by police that the building contains a marijuana grow operation and, if the inspector finds that the building is unsafe, to require the inspector to issue an order setting out the remedial steps needed to make it safe.

"The maximum penalties for offences under the act are doubled."

The second act that the bill affects is the Crown Attorneys Act:

"The amendments provide for the appointment of a director of asset management—criminal. The director will be responsible for holding, managing or disposing of property restrained by or forfeited to the crown in right of Ontario under the Criminal Code (Canada). The management of this property will now be governed by the Crown Attorneys Act rather than the Escheats Act.

"The director is given broad powers to enable him or her to manage and dispose of the property.

"Money forfeited to the crown, proceeds from the sale or disposition of property forfeited to the crown and money paid to the Attorney General or the government as a fine in lieu of forfeiture of property that is proceeds of crime under criminal law are to be credited to existing special purpose accounts, known as the Ministry of the Attorney General forfeited proceeds of crime account and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services forfeited proceeds of crime account. The money standing to the credit of the accounts may be used to comply with a court order respecting property forfeited to the crown and for crime prevention, law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice."

The third act that it affects is the Electricity Act, 1998:

"The act is amended to allow distributors to shut off electricity to a property without prior notice if they have reason to believe that there is a condition in respect of the property that threatens or is likely to threaten the safety of any person or the reliability of the distribution system. An owner or occupier of the property may ask the Ontario Energy Board to review the shut-off and the board may order the distributor to restore electricity to the property if it finds that the distributor acted unreasonably in shutting off or failing to restore the electricity.

"The maximum penalties for individuals for offences under the act are increased to \$50,000, and \$5,000 for each day the offence continues. Individuals are also made liable to a maximum jail term of one year. A maximum fine of \$1,000,000 is added for corporations."

The next bill that is affected is the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997:

"The maximum penalties for offences under the act are doubled."

The next act is the Municipal Act, 2001:

"The act is amended to confirm municipalities' powers to coordinate their law enforcement activities with persons and bodies with mutual interests."

Next are the Prohibiting Profiting from Recounting Crimes Act, 2002, and Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001:

"Currently, under both these acts, property may be forfeited to the crown in right of Ontario by court order. The court may make interlocutory orders to preserve any property that is the subject of an ongoing proceeding under either act.

"The acts are amended to expand the powers to deal both with property that is the subject of an interlocutory order and property after it is forfeited to the crown.

"With respect to property that is the subject of an interlocutory order, the acts are amended so that an interlocutory order may authorize not only preserving, but also managing or disposing of the property. In addition, an interlocutory order may provide that proceeds of disposition of the property disposed of pursuant to the order may be paid to the crown to reimburse it for the costs incurred in conducting the interlocutory proceeding and in managing or disposing of the property.

"With respect to property after it is forfeited or paid as damages to the crown under the acts, the acts are amended to provide that the property is to be managed by the director of asset management—civil, and not as provided by the Escheats Act. The director is to be appointed by the Attorney General and is given broad powers to deal with property. The crown is entitled to deduct the costs incurred in conducting a proceeding and in dealing with property from the special purpose accounts established under these acts. Payment of the crown's costs is given priority over other payments from the special purpose accounts, except where there would be insufficient funds to satisfy victims' claims after paying the crown's costs and the director elects to give up that priority.

"The Attorney General is permitted to collect personal information under these acts for limited purposes. Additional purposes are added to those already set out.

"Further amendments are made to the provisions respecting personal information in the Remedies for Organized Crime and Other Unlawful Activities Act, 2001. In that act, certain personal information may only be provided to the Attorney General if its disclosure is first approved by a reviewing authority designated under the act. This is amended so that the person who provides personal information to the Attorney General may provide additional personal information directly to the Attorney General, without prior approval of the reviewing authority, if the information meets the other criteria for disclosure in the act and if its existence is itself disclosed by the information approved by the reviewing authority. The provisions respecting personal health information are amended to conform to the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004."

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity you've allowed me to read these into the record because I think the explanatory notes are a very important part of the legislation. In fact, we talked about it last night. I compared two bills: one that I presented, Bill 88, and then Bill 159. Actually, Bill 88 had a very long explanatory note and Bill 159, of course, had a very brief note. I wanted to put that on the record, because we do actually have the time.

It's good to see I'm joined tonight by my colleagues Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Barrett, two very hard-working members, very, very supportive of all the rural activities in our province. It's good to see the new Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs here this evening as well. Again, we were at estimates today and the minister was there and I do appreciate the fact that she answered the questions very professionally. I look forward to hearing your comments and your answers in the provincial Legislature in the months ahead.

As I said earlier, our caucus will be supporting this piece of legislation. Look, we've got problems with drug-related crimes in the province of Ontario. We all have to join together in this type of legislation. No matter how strong or weak the legislation is, I think it's imperative, if we believe in community safety, that we get behind it. I also want to pass on to the minister that after our long debate last night, we discussed in caucus today that we will be supporting Bill 159; very reluctantly in some cases, but we will be supporting it.

Why there is some disappointment in Bill 128 is that our party made a number of amendments that dealt with adding other illegal drug operations to the bill. I think we all realize that there are a number of other illegal drug operations that are prevalent today in the province of Ontario even stronger than the marijuana grow-ops. The one that comes to everybody's mind today is the crystal meth labs that have been set up across the province. The fact of the matter is, that is why we tried to make a number of amendments. With or without the amendments, though, we will be supporting the legislation,



although we really do hope that something can be done immediately with crystal meth labs here in Ontario.

1930

I want to put on the record, I want to show the members in the House and the people in Hansard, anyone who would read Hansard—is there a ball game on tonight, Mr. Murdoch? Maybe our audience won't be that strong tonight. I leave that up to the member from Niagara Centre to determine, because he is kind of an expert on how many people watch the parliamentary proceedings in the evening. But with a ball game on, if it's an important game, we may not get huge attendance on this. But I do want to say that we in the Progressive Conservative caucus made a number of amendments to the legislation. There were a couple that were partially received, but we were disappointed that in this time of democratic renewal—we expected that we would act together as one big happy family here at work for the rights of all the citizens of Ontario, that the government would get behind the bill, the regulations and the amendments, and we thought maybe they would support it. Anyhow, I am going to put the amendments on record. This is not the most exciting time of the debate, but I can certainly say that I want to put them on record and I will read them in as we speak. These are the PC motions that I'm going to read in now.

"Section 1 of the bill

"The Progressive Conservative Party recommends voting against section 1.

"Reason for notice rather than motion"—these are the motions we put in—"This notice, which recommends voting against the section, is provided instead of a motion to delete it. The reason for this approach is that parliamentary procedure requires that the committee vote against the section, rather than pass a motion to delete it from the bill, if the committee wishes to have it removed from the bill." That is kind of a housekeeping type of motion, which of course was not supported.

"Section 2 of the bill

"The Progressive Conservative Party recommends voting against section 2.

"Reason for notice rather than motion: This notice, which recommends voting against the section, is provided instead of a motion to delete it. The reason for this approach is that parliamentary procedure requires that the committee vote against the section, rather than pass a motion to delete it from the bill, if the committee wishes to have it removed from the bill." That was the second motion that wasn't passed.

Then we get right into the actual motions that we wanted to see passed and debated, and of course they were all turned down.

"5.1 The act is amended by adding the following section:

"Separate account for money from marijuana grow and other illegal drug production operations

"14.7(1) Despite section 14.6, money described in paragraph 1 or 2 of subsection 14.6(1) that is forfeited or paid as a fine pursuant to a conviction in relation to a

marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation or that is the proceeds of the sale or other disposition of property of or related to a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation shall be deposited in a separate interest-bearing account in the consolidated revenue fund."

"Same

"(2) For the purpose of the Financial Administration Act, money deposited under subsection (1) shall be deemed to be money paid to Ontario for a special purpose.

"Same

"(3) The Minister of Finance may make payments out of the account described in subsection (1) for the purpose of law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice in relation to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations, including payment to municipalities of compensation for the costs, including the costs of specialized training and equipment, incurred by them in relation to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations.

"Definitions

"(4) In this section,

"'illegal drug production operation' means a lab for the illegal production of methamphetamine, ecstasy or marijuana or for the extraction of cannabis resin;

"'marijuana grow operation' means an operation for the illegal growing of marijuana."

That too was turned down. We're dealing with the fact that we've asked for other illegal drug operations.

Section 12.1 of the bill (section 30.1 of the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997):

"12.1 The act is amended by adding the following section:

"Proceeds of fines

"30.1 If an offence under section 28, 29 or 30 has been committed within a municipality, the proceeds of a fine imposed under that section shall be paid to the treasurer of that municipality, and section 2 of the Administration of Justice Act and section 4 of the Fines and Forfeitures Act do not apply in respect of the fine."

Apparently these were turned down because they relate to the fact that the minister has to determine whether there are any monetary gains or issues or amendments made. It should be done through the minister's office, and that's what we tried to provide to the justice policy committee.

Section 12.2 of the bill (section 431.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001):

"12.2 The Municipal Act, 2001 is amended by adding the following section:

"Marijuana grow and other illegal drug production operations

"431.1(1) An official designated by a municipality may enter upon land and into a building at any reasonable time without a warrant for the purpose of inspecting a building if the municipality has been notified by a police force that the building contains a marijuana

grow operation or other illegal drug production operation.

“Inspection

“(2) The inspection authorized by subsection (1) must be carried out within a reasonable time after the municipality has been notified as described in that subsection.

“Same

“(3) The municipality may designate, for the purposes of carrying out an inspection under this section, any municipal official who is appointed for the purpose of enforcing municipal bylaws, acts or regulations under acts.

“Training

“(4) Every municipality shall provide training and equipment to its officials who may be required to enter and inspect a building that contains a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation.

“Lien

“(5) If a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation is in a municipality, the municipality shall have a lien on the land for the costs described in subsection (5) and the amount shall have priority lien status as described in section 1 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

“Where operation is in lower-tier municipality

“(6) If the marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation is located in a lower-tier municipality and both the lower-tier and upper-tier municipalities appoint officials for the purpose of enforcing municipal bylaws, acts or regulations under acts, the notice referred to in subsection (1) shall be given in writing to the head of both the upper-tier and local-tier municipalities.

“Rental property, landlord registries

“(7) A municipality may establish and maintain a rental property registry or a landlord registry, or both, that,

“(a) lists every property that contained a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation; and

“(b) includes such other information that the municipality specifies in the bylaw establishing the registry.

“Owner, landlord has duty of due diligence

“(8) Every owner and lessor of real property shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the property does not contain a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation.

“Duty to inform prospective tenants, purchasers

“(9) The owner of property that contained a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation must not sell or lease the property without advising the prospective purchaser or lessee that the property contained such an operation.

“Limitation

“(10) Subsection (9) applies only to the first sale or lease of the property after it ceased to contain a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation.

“Protection from personal liability

“(11) No action or other proceeding for damages shall be instituted against a municipality or any employee or official of a municipality for any act done in good faith in the performance or intended performance of any duty under this section or in the exercise or in the intended exercise of any power under this section or for any neglect or default in the performance or exercise in good faith of any such duty or power.”

I'm getting to the end of these, Mr. Speaker.

“Regulations

“(12) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations,

“(a) prescribing the training and equipment to be provided to municipal officials under subsection (4);

“(b) prescribing safety standards to be observed by municipal officials who enter buildings containing a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation; and

“(c) governing the sharing of information with police forces about marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations.

“Application

“(13) This section applies to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations that are located on any class of property prescribed under section 7 of the Assessment Act.

## 1940

“Definitions

“(14) In this section,

““illegal drug production operation” means a lab for the illegal production of methamphetamine, ecstasy or marijuana or for the extraction of cannabis resin;

““marijuana grow operation” means an operation for the illegal growing of marijuana;

““police force” means a municipal police force, the Ontario Provincial Police or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.”

I continue down the path of dealing with these amendments because in our debates here, in the questions we've brought forward to the House and in the amendments we've brought forward, I'm trying to point out that we tried diligently to add other illegal drug operations to this bill. I can tell you, we weren't alone on that. Many of the organizations, the stakeholders who took part in the committee hearings, also asked for that. That was the major disappointment with this bill.

I move along to other motions we presented. Section 17.1 of the bill (subsection 9.0.1 of the Prohibiting Profiting from Recounting Crimes Act, 2002):

“17.1 The act is amended by adding the following section:

“Separate account for money from marijuana grow and other illegal drug production operations

“9.0.1(1) Despite section 9, money described in subsection 9(1) that is forfeited or paid to the crown in right of Ontario that is related to a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation shall



be deposited in a separate interest-bearing account in the consolidated revenue fund.

“Same

“(2) For the purpose of the Financial Administration Act, money deposited under subsection (1) shall be deemed to be money paid to Ontario for a special purpose.

“Same

“(3) The Minister of Finance may make payments out of the account described in subsection (1) for the purpose of law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice in relation to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations, including payment to municipalities of compensation for the costs, including the costs of specialized training and equipment, incurred by them in relation to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations.

“Definitions

“(4) In this section,

“‘illegal drug production operation’ means a lab for the illegal production of methamphetamine, ecstasy or marijuana or for the extraction of cannabis resin;

“‘marijuana grow operation’ means an operation for the illegal growing of marijuana.”

That wasn't supported because we talked about some financial responsibilities that apparently only the minister can bring forward, but they never brought those forward. Again, it was just strictly left with the marijuana grow operations.

This is the next PC motion.

“22.1 The act is amended by adding the following section:

“Separate account for money from marijuana grow and other illegal drug production operations

“6.1(1) Despite section 6, money described in subsection 6(1) that is forfeited to the crown in right of Ontario that is related to a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation shall be deposited in a separate interest-bearing account in the consolidated revenue fund.

“Same

“(2) For the purpose of the Financial Administration Act, money deposited under subsection (1) shall be deemed to be money paid to Ontario for a special purpose.

“Same

“(3) The Minister of Finance may make payments out of the account described in subsection (1) for the purpose of law enforcement and the administration of criminal justice in relation to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations, including payment to municipalities of compensation for the costs, including the costs of specialized training and equipment, incurred by them in relation to marijuana grow operations and other illegal drug production operations.”

I'm not going to repeat this, but this section again just deals with the other drugs we're talking about and the marijuana grow operation itself.

Our next amendment dealt with section 25.1.

“Separate account for money from marijuana grow and other illegal drug production operations

“11.1(1) Despite section 11, money described in subsection 11(1) that is forfeited to the crown in right of Ontario that is related to a marijuana grow operation or other illegal drug production operation shall be deposited in a separate interest-bearing account in the consolidated revenue fund.”

Again, this is a repeat of the last one. These amendments all deal with opening up separate accounts for the proceeds of crime, basically. We were told we were not allowed to bring those forward, that those had to be dealt with strictly by the minister. That was the reason used by the parliamentary assistant at the time for not having the Liberal Party support these bills.

We dealt with three other bills, which all dealt with the Minister of Finance. The final one I wanted to add was on the long title of the bill. I wanted to deal with this tonight because it's part of the reason why we were questioning the bill. It was the final PC motion: “that the long title of the bill be amended by striking out ‘as a result of organized crime, marijuana growing and other unlawful activities’ at the end and substituting ‘as a result of organized crime, marijuana growing and other illegal drug production and other unlawful activities.’” We dealt with that and were asking for that support because we do feel there is a serious problem in Ontario with other illegal drug operations, in particular the crystal meth labs.

There are a couple of severe weaknesses in the bill that we have to discuss. Although it was a result of the Green Tide Summit, one thing that is amazing about this bill is that it does not talk at all about the outdoor marijuana grow operations. If you had watched your TV screen at all this summer, you would have seen that the Ontario Provincial Police in particular have uncovered a number of outdoor grow operations. In fact, they have charged folks across the province who had literally hundreds of thousands of plants in their outdoor grow operations.

What comes to mind more than anything else is the fact that we have a real issue around crystal meth labs here in Ontario. I know the minister has had some problems in dealing with this, because it's something that has come at all police forces and police services across our country very quickly. I am not entirely pleased that the government allocated \$230,000 toward crystal meth labs at the Ontario Police College. I think we may have been able to deal with that in some different areas. As we know, there have been a lot of stories this year in particular around the crystal meth labs that the police are trying to uncover in the province. It's my understanding, from talking to police in drug enforcement agencies like the Ontario Provincial Police and some of the folks I've met at the Toronto Police Service in particular, that the crystal meth labs have become a very, very serious problem.

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I want to put a case on record tonight. I called the father today, a gentlemen by the name of Michael Roth-

well. He came to see me a few weeks ago and brought me some information regarding the death of his son and the access that young people have to drug paraphernalia in some retail stores in Ontario. I'm going to read a letter that Michael Rothwell wrote to Dr. Sheela Basrur, the medical officer of health. This is a very sad story and I want to put it on the record. I want to try to help Mr. Rothwell, if I can, in future months. It says:

"Dear Dr. Basrur:

"I am writing to inform you of a major public health issue affecting 10- to 18-year-old youth in Ontario.

"While the province of Ontario is doing an outstanding job on dealing with access to tobacco with youth and the marketing of tobacco products to youth, it has not adequately addressed the very serious public health problem of youth access to stores specializing in 'smoking accessories,' or what is really drug paraphernalia."

Mr. Rothwell goes on to say:

"My 16-year-old son, Ben, died a month ago and his death was drug-related. As early as the age of 13 he had accessed several stores in the Kitchener-Waterloo area which sell drug-smoking accessories and illegal-drug-use literature. He was a gifted child and we began to see symptoms of depression after he began smoking pot in grade 8. Pot was his main drug of choice for the last two years but he bought a gram of crystal meth for the first time the night before he died." This is a very sad story. "He drowned in the Grand River in Kitchener."

Mr. Rothwell goes on to say:

"My position is that right now there are thousands of children in Ontario who are at an increased risk of trying or accelerating drug use because of the unrestricted access to the stores I've described. Our society is currently failing to take the necessary steps to at least restrict access to those stores to people of the age of 19 or older. I do not believe that placing an age restriction on accessing these stores would 'solve' the drug problem, but rather view it as an obvious or no-brainer restriction, just one small part of an overall youth drug risk strategy.

"I am hoping that in your position as Chief Medical Officer of Health you can help convey this as a public health issue in Ontario. Children deserve protection from business people who will profit from promoting and selling products that harm them. Surely as adults we are failing our children when we cannot help them in this way.

"As you are more aware than me, the drug problem with youth is becoming a serious crisis. Please help. Drug paraphernalia stores should be restricted and marijuana should never be legalized.

"Thank you very much for the good work you do."

That's signed by Michael Rothwell, who has now moved up to my riding. He lives in Orillia. He came to see me because he wants to be an advocate to try to stop retail stores from selling drug paraphernalia. That is why I wanted to bring that forward tonight. We're talking about Bill 128 and it's strictly on the marijuana grow-ops, but we should have added other things in this bill. We have an opportunity here in this House, when we're

dealing with a drug, to improve that bill, and that's why I wanted to add some other bills.

Now I find letters like this come in, where we have an opportunity to help in somebody's life. He makes a great point: Someone who is 16 years old can't go into a convenience store and buy a package of cigarettes; he can't go to the liquor store and buy a bottle of alcohol or a case of beer at the Brewer's Retail; he can't go into a bar. But you know what? He can go into a drug paraphernalia store and buy all the ingredients he needs.

**Mr. Kormos:** To make marijuana?

**Mr. Dunlop:** To make crystal meth, in this case.

This gentleman, to the member for Niagara Centre, lost his son. It's a very, very serious case here and I wanted to put that on the record because I told him I was going to try to help him in any way I can. Whether we can do anything in this House, I'm not sure. But surely, if we can prohibit someone from buying a package of cigarettes, we can stop someone from buying drug paraphernalia.

I wanted to wind up here in the last few minutes I have on what I consider to be the weaknesses of this government. We were talking about the lobbying today from the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police.

I see my leader is here tonight, and I welcome him to the night sitting.

**Mr. Kormos:** He's been here all day.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I'm not going to go there.

He's a very hard-working leader and I hope he's the Premier in two years' time from now. I think a lot of people in Ontario are hoping he'll be the Premier in two years' time from now.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Dunlop:** I don't know if I want that or not.

I believe, as the critic for community safety and corrections, that there are a number of weaknesses that the government has. My first comment will be that the comments I'm going to make are saying nothing negative about the minister himself because, of all the cabinet ministers in the Liberal government, one of the people I admire the most is Minister Kwinter. But I can tell you that as we look at potential cuts to the justice ministries, it's our understanding from the people that we talk to, my contacts in community safety, that this government is looking for upwards of \$300 million in savings out of those two ministries. I want to pass on that I don't know how we can possibly improve community safety if we're trying to eliminate \$300 million from it, but I can say that that will be my top priority as we look at the next two years in this House and what the government will do to try to find those savings, and how they will not have a negative impact on community safety.

We have passed the mandatory reporting of gunshot wounds. I know the government has made a special attempt to try to promote that any time they get an opportunity. A couple of photo ops, a couple of press conferences—I just want to go back and say that although I'm glad that we have come into the 21st century on this particular piece of legislation, it is something



that I believe Bob Runciman made the first motion for, back in December 2003. Bob Runciman at that time, the former Minister of Community Safety, had asked that we include knife wounds in the mandatory reporting. That was not done. We made some amendments on that in the committees as well, and as we proceed forward, only the mandatory reporting of gunshot wounds are included at this point.

The police helicopter in Toronto: I've got to go back to that because this has become an issue again. A couple of the radio stations have been doing a media blitz on this particular piece of legislation. I think that the mayor was opposed to a helicopter. We, in fact, as a government in the budget of 2003 had allocated \$1 million for a police helicopter for the Toronto Police Service. The government turned it down flat, but now I understand the government is making a strong point of using airplanes as a surveillance method for the 400 series of highways. It seems that a helicopter's no good for Toronto, but if we're going to keep police officers off the highway for traffic patrol, the surveillance of an airplane is fine. That's something that I wish the government would come back to. I wish they'd revisit that. I've talked to a number of police officers, a number of people who support the Toronto Police Service having a helicopter. I would hope that in the next provincial budget they would revisit that particular issue.

We've talked a number of times about the 1,000 cops. We've announced it five times, if you include the throne speech last week.

**Mr. Kormos:** We've talked a lot about the 1,000 cops.

**Mr. Dunlop:** We've talked a lot about the 1,000 cops—over and over. But I can tell you, we haven't seen any new officers yet. We understand that as municipalities discuss their budgets and put their budgets forward this coming winter, they may hire some of them. It was my hope that by now, two years into the mandate, we would have had at least 333 of those officers on the streets and highways etc. and in their communities across the province. That has not happened. What's even more of a concern is the fact that none of the 1,000 police officers that Dalton McGuinty's government has announced will go to the OPP unless they are under contract to a municipality. So, any of the special projects that the OPP have, and any of the growth that we've seen in our communities, like in the 400 series of highways, or Internet luring, or child pornography, we will not see any additional police officers in those areas.

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The same as the cuts to Criminal Intelligence Service Ontario. It's my understanding, as we stand here tonight, that the CISO budget has been cut by \$1.76 million. This is something that the government is not coming forward with, and I can tell you that a lot of the stakeholders are a little reluctant to talk about CISO cuts right now, but if I'm wrong on this and CISO has not been cut by \$1.76 million, I'd ask that the ministry respond somehow in comments or questions and possibly clarify that. But our

informants and the people we've talked to tell us that CISO has been cut by that amount.

**Cuts to Taser:** The Prime Minister apparently has made some commitment to police services about supporting Tasers for our police services, and now we understand that they're not available.

Something that's very near and dear to my heart and our new leader John Tory—and he has been a very strong advocate this summer. He's trying to correct what's going on in the province of Ontario with gun violence. This has become a serious problem for the citizens of our province, but particularly here in the city of Toronto. We need to take action on this issue. I met this morning with our leader and over 30 police chiefs in the province. I can tell you, it's a key issue. I think that the chiefs of police of Ontario are disappointed that there has not been more forward thinking and more aggressive attack made on this very, very serious problem. I do want to thank our leader for holding a symposium this summer on gun violence and youth crime. It was very well attended, and we found some very positive comments coming out of that.

Something that came up in the House today was the parole board. There's going to be a lot of questions asked on the parole board in the next few days. I know the minister did make a commitment today that it's a done deal. It's our understanding that we've gone a long way down that path and that it probably is a done deal, but I would hope that the government would review the whole thought of eliminating the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board. We think it's a step in the wrong direction.

One of the things I wanted to deal with in the few minutes I have left is some of the closures of some of the large institutions for people who are mentally challenged. All three parties have had some responsibility for this over the last 25 years. What we're hearing from some of our community safety partners is that there has been some mental health issues on the streets of our cities. I can tell you that we have a serious case up in my community, the riding of Simcoe North, with the closure of the Huronia Regional Centre, where over 300 people will be moved out of that facility. I can tell you that apparently what we're told by family members, by some doctors and some professional people, is that, as we speak today, there are, right in the city of Toronto alone, something like 2,200 people requiring those specialized services in a group home setting, through community living, whatever.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** That's not grow-ops.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I'm talking about community safety here, and I'm talking about mental health.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** But the bill is on grow-ops.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Yes, I know. We've talked a lot about grow-ops, but I'm telling you, I have a real problem with the closing of those facilities. I'm not trying to say that all three parties haven't done it in the past, but the people

who remain in those facilities today are very, very severely challenged, mentally and physically. I can tell you that it will create—and I'm getting around to the community safety aspect again—a problem, because if they take up spaces in the group home setting, we do not have the spaces in the group homes for the 2,200 people who are on the list today, which will create a community safety problem. That is what we heard today from the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police a number of times during their conversations.

I do want to say to everyone here tonight that I have been a very strong advocate for keeping them open. I know that everyone doesn't share my view on that. I can say that in my community in the city of Orillia at the Huronia Regional Centre, we have an organization called the Huronia Helpers, who are fighting hard. They're using legal methods, they're using fundraising methods and they're using the media to try to promote the fact that they should keep these facilities open.

I'm coming to the end of my comments on Bill 128. I know it's a bill that we would like to see passed, but we would like to have seen it passed with some additional amendments made in it. With that, I'd ask that all members of this House in our own caucus support the bill.

I want to see this bill implemented, but I also hope that the government is not very far behind on crystal meth. And I hope they will pay attention to some of the things that I've brought up tonight, things like the Huronia Regional Centre and the weaknesses that the government has on community safety. We heard it over and over again today. I don't know how many of you folks in the House met with the OACP, and in a few weeks' time we'll have the Police Association of Ontario here, but I can tell you that these are very important issues to our police stakeholders. We as parliamentarians have to do the best we can to support the people who keep our communities safe.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to wind it up here now at this point. I thank you so much for the opportunity to speak to you this evening. I hope that for the remainder of this session you enjoy your seat as Deputy Speaker. I can tell you that I supported you in your quest for Speaker. I have to say that out loud.

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** It's a secret ballot.

**Mr. Dunlop:** It's not secret to me. I think that Ted Arnett is a phenomenal member of Parliament and speaks well in this House. I wish you well in your future, if you decide to challenge that position somewhere down the road. So, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity. I look forward to all the debate—

**Mr. Kormos:** No, Garfield, no.

**Mr. Dunlop:** At the last second here, as I'm about to close down, I'm getting the voice from Niagara Centre, who can talk for 22 hours straight. I can tell you that he wants me to continue on for the last six minutes. At these kinds of times I could share my time with some of the other members or I could continue on.

**Mr. Levac:** You've got six more minutes.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I know, and I've been here for 54 of them. This is not an easy task.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** Talk about Christian Island.

**Mr. Dunlop:** We're talking about community safety, and I'm so pleased that the Minister of Tourism has brought up the topic of Christian Island. If people won't rule me out of order, I was out on Christian Island on Sunday to the Remembrance Day service. I have to report back to the Minister of Tourism that the community centre that we both did a sod-turning at almost two years ago is coming along extremely well. I hope we can be joined again for the official ribbon-cutting at some point. It's a beautiful facility on one of the most beautiful First Nations in the province of Ontario.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** It must have been approved by the previous government.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Actually, both the Liberal government and the Conservative government can take credit for the community centre at Christian Island. It was done under the SuperBuild program, under the sports, culture and recreation program. That was done by Tim Hudak. But I was joined on Christian Island by Minister Bradley. We have a responsibility in this province to support community safety and a good-quality life for everyone, and I do thank everyone responsible for the new community centre in Christian Island.

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I also want to make a comment on the police service on the Beausoleil First Nation on Christian Island. Just the other day at the Remembrance Day service the chief of police was there, along with the officers and the fire department. Sadly to say, at a Remembrance Day service in this, the Year of the Veteran, the Beausoleil First Nation lost their last remaining veteran, this past year. That was one of the topics of the service. I can tell you that it's very important that we acknowledge our veterans. It's very important that our First Nations veterans get equal treatment or better, because I can tell you, if you look across this province and you look at all the First Nations, they played a phenomenal role in helping our armed forces fight for the democracy and the freedom that we have in this country today.

I thank you so much for this opportunity tonight. I will leave three minutes for further debate for someone else at a later point, but I do thank you for this opportunity and thank the members for not heckling me too badly. I do appreciate this opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Kormos:** I am sure I'm joined by everybody in this chamber in expressing gratitude to the member from Simcoe North for his exhaustive analysis of Bill 128, for his thorough review of the history of that legislation and, according to him, its import—which he suggests isn't a great deal, and I'm inclined to agree in that regard—to making our community safer. I'm looking forward to the chance to address this bill now as it is on third reading.

You've got to take a look at the reprinted bill, because you have never seen—take a look, Mr. Tascona—so many sections stroked out. This bill has been through the



meat grinder and, heck, it darned near got rewritten. Thank goodness Ms. Sandals was in committee because, heck, if it had not been for her eagle eyes and her throwing up her hands and saying, "Look at that section. That's a piece of useless stuff. Let's withdraw that. That's another section that's a useless piece of useless stuff"—Ms. Sandals was just vicious when it came to eviscerating this bill. She was in there with a pickaxe and a jackhammer, and just tossing things out left and right until there was nothing left but a shell. Then, of course, the task came to the committee—and I was proud to serve on the committee; Mr. Dunlop was on the committee. The task came to the committee to write the bill as it might—and that's not to criticize the people who drafted the bill. They were just following orders. You've got to understand. That defence is in the context of legislative draftspeople: They were simply following orders from their political masters. I'm going to have a chance to speak to this in my hour in a few minutes' time.

**Mrs. Sandals:** I'd like to respond to the comments from the member for Simcoe North. Actually, the member from Niagara Centre gave me an excellent opportunity to mention one of the things which I wanted to do. When we went to public hearings with this bill, we listened very carefully to what people had to say, and where we thought there was an opportunity to amend the bill and accommodate some of those suggestions, we did.

I just wanted to correct the record, because I believe that what the member from Simcoe North was reading into the record was the unamended bill, and we do want to make reference to the bill as amended. In fact, the bill no longer amends the building code. We listened to the people representing municipalities, who said, "Don't put this specifically on the building inspector position; we want you to give more flexibility to municipalities to use other inspectors." In some municipalities it would be a building inspector and in some it would be some other inspector, so in fact we changed that. But what does remain in the bill is the requirement that once a grow-op is dismantled, the municipality will be notified and is required to make sure that the building is inspected, and if any damage has been done to the structure by the grow operation, that damage will be remedied, be it electrical, structural or mould issues around health and safety.

I wanted to correct the record so that viewers will understand that it is not the building code we have amended but the Municipal Act, because we listened and we wanted to give municipalities maximum flexibility.

**Mr. Joseph N. Tascona (Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford):** I'm pleased to provide my comments on Bill 128. This is a serious issue, quite confusing in terms of what they're trying to accomplish here. They're focusing on the grow-op, but this bill is a little short on enforcement. As you see, they stroked out the building code entirely. In terms of giving powers to the municipalities to actually enforce this bill, it really doesn't measure up. As we know, there was a recent Supreme Court of Canada case dealing with helicopters and the use of heat-detecting equipment, thermography. At the initial court level, that was ruled to

be intrusive and against the charter, if you can believe that, in dealing with grow-ops, but that was overturned later at the higher court levels. But you can see the challenges we're going to have with respect to enforcement, and they're not giving the tools to the municipalities to deal with this issue the way it should be dealt with.

One thing they're not dealing with is the gang violence that's going to result from this measure in terms of trying to shut down the grow-op industry. Gang violence, which has been all through Toronto this year in terms of the shootings and whatever, has been going up into my area, Barrie, and even as far as the riding of the member for Simcoe North, in terms of people going there because they don't have gang warfare and they see it as a fertile area in being able to do their work.

The bottom line is that this grow-op issue, in terms of gang violence and dealing with the groups that have a vested stake in this, is not going to be dealt with by this government, because they've never dealt with the gang violence issue, and they continue to fail miserably.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** It's my pleasure to make some comments on the debate brought forward by Garfield Dunlop earlier this evening.

I have to say, part of my thrill of being here tonight is because I know that our leadoff speech on third reading is coming very shortly from the member from Niagara Centre, Mr. Peter Kormos, who has shown, time after time after time, his unique breadth of knowledge and understanding about pieces of legislation such as this. If you recall, on second reading he had significant input into the problems with this particular bill. He in fact reinforced that understanding and that relevancy in his comments a few moments ago when he noted, when you look at the rewritten bill, the extent to which it was required to be amended because it just wasn't up to snuff when it was first introduced by the government.

Notwithstanding that, we're going into the process now of third reading. Mr. Kormos is going to give quite an extensive critique and review of the bill as it stands now. Part of that, I'm sure, will include his vast understanding not only of the details of the bill specifically but also about the very pieces of input that bear on the debate and that bear on the way we view this particular type of legislation. Certainly Bill 128, the grow-ops bill, has been a work in progress over the last several months, but is now to the point where the government is bringing it for third reading. Although I'm sure there are still more pieces of fine-tuning that need to be done, my understanding is that a number of issues have been resolved.

But having said that, the bottom line is that when it comes to charging municipalities with the responsibility and giving them the tools to deal with these kinds of situations, we'll also require the recognition that those municipalities will need the resources to attend to these kinds of problems. Unfortunately, this government is not going down that road.

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**The Acting Speaker:** That concludes the time for questions and comments. The member for Simcoe North has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I appreciate the fact that the members for Niagara Centre, Guelph—Wellington—Mrs. Sandals, the parliamentary assistant—Barrie—Simcoe—Bradford and Hamilton East all made comments on this bill.

It has been my pleasure to be here to make comments. For two nights in a row now—we had Bill 159 and now Bill 128 this evening—we have tried to stress the fact that, as I mentioned earlier, we'll be supporting both the bills, fairly reluctantly in some cases, but we do believe in community safety, and these are, in both cases, steps toward improved community safety in Ontario.

As I said earlier, I would have liked to have seen some amendments made to cover other drugs. With that being said, if we're going to pass the vote on this bill without that, I'm hoping we can help our police services and particularly the young people of our province deal with things like crystal meth as quickly as possible so we can avoid some of the loss of life, like the case of Ben Rothwell, the person I mentioned. His father had come to see me and presented me with that letter. I think it's important. We have that responsibility here.

Who knew, even three or four years ago, that we would need a marijuana grow-op bill for residential and commercial indoor grow-ops in Ontario, or a crystal meth bill? But these things come upon us in the field of community safety and we have to try to find the resources and the help for our police services so we can combat crime and make our streets and our communities safer for everyone.

I do appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Legislative Assembly tonight, and I look forward to further debate.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Kormos:** It's my pleasure to address this bill on the occasion now of third reading. I'm especially pleased that I have the chance to do it here this evening in the chamber while Bill Murdoch, the member for Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, is present in the House. People should know that here we are at 8:30 in the evening—8:25 p.m., to be precise—and Bill Murdoch, as one of the senior members of that caucus, certainly is not compelled to be here after working a full 12-hour day. Night duty is oftentimes left to more junior members of caucus who don't have seniority. But Bill Murdoch is as hard-working and committed a member of this Legislative Assembly as the chamber has ever witnessed. As I say, it's a real pleasure to be able to make my comments with Mr. Murdoch in the House. I look forward to his participation in this debate in view of what I know is a progressive, albeit conservative, perspective around the whole issue of marijuana and the problem, the plague, of dangerous marijuana grow-ops.

One of the problems we had during the course of the committee—and we challenged the government over and over again to please define “marijuana grow-op.” Mr.

Tascona's community of Barrie was home to the largest indoor marijuana grow-op that this country has ever witnessed: the old Molson building on Highway 400. We understand that a grow operation of that scale is a grow-op that justifiably ought to be regarded as a grow-op for the purpose of this legislation. My concern—again, not that I condone these things, but it's the reality of life in 2005—is the college kid with a couple of pot plants on his or her windowsill. Is that a grow-op—well, think about it—for the purpose of invoking some extraordinary powers on the part of officials?

That observation simply illustrates this point: that this bill has absolutely nothing to do with facilitating cops busting grow operations—nothing whatsoever. It doesn't make it easier, it doesn't make it harder, for municipal police, for OPP, for RCMP to bust a grow-op. Don't try to pretend that it does.

Mr. Tascona, learned in the law, made reference to the litigation around the use of airplane or helicopter—I can't recall—

**Mr. Tascona:** Thermography.

**Mr. Kormos:** Thermography. This indoor grow-op, of course, generates heat in and of its own right, I presume. The plants produce heat, but also the heat and the lighting and the humidity that's used to create a climate to grow this stuff in. This is detectable from overhead by a plane or a helicopter, I guess, using this thermography technology. It's a photographic type of technology.

As I recall, and there will be those in this chamber who will correct me if I'm wrong—and there will be some who will even correct me if I'm right; it's their nature—at the trial level the accused, who had been busted for marijuana, argued that the search was unlawful, unreasonable, contrary to the charter, as Mr. Tascona indicated. Subsequent appellate courts said, “No. This is a perfectly legal, constitutional form of surveillance.” What that means is that for all intents and purposes there's no such thing as a clandestine grow-op anywhere in the 10 provinces and three territories. It's a simple matter of a drug team getting up there with the plane with the thermographic technology, which isn't that expensive—don't forget, firefighters are using it, aren't they?; sure they are—and identifying grow-ops wherever and whenever they may happen to be.

There are no secrets any more. There's no hidden pot-growing operation. Why are they a plague, then? Why do they continue to be a problem? Why will they continue to be a plague and a problem even after the government—I trust that its members will pass Bill 128. It's not that we need Bill 128 to facilitate busting grow-ops. In fact, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the Ontario Court of Appeal, Mr. Tascona tells me, and has provided this easy access. It's like opening the door, wide open, of every grow-op in town.

Why aren't the police busting them? It's not going to be because of or in spite of or notwithstanding Bill 128; it's because the police don't have the resources. If the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services—no, I shouldn't do that, because I do not blame



Mr. Kwinter for the shortcomings and inadequacies of the McGuinty government.

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If Mr. McGuinty and his government were really serious about the plague of grow-ops, they'd be giving the cops the tools to bust them. They'd be giving them the resources. We had the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police visiting Queen's Park today, and to the final one, the first and primary concern was the inadequacy of resources to do their job, including staffing. A thousand new cops—once 1,000 new cops, twice 1,000 new cops, three times. What's that old line? "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." That long-time, three-time promise still hasn't resulted in a single new cop anywhere in the province of Ontario. Chiefs of police told us today that the bottom-line need is far in excess of 1,000, but it doesn't matter anyway, because they haven't got any one of the 1,000.

I want to thank Elliott Anderson from legislative research in the NDP caucus for his assistance in researching so much of the background on marijuana and grow-ops. He brought a special expertise to this work, and we're grateful to him. But you might have read Rosie DiManno, who did some participatory research of her own. Rosie DiManno's a writer, a very good writer, a very capable writer. I've been reading her for a long, long time in the *Toronto Star*.

On October 17, 2005, in her column, where she talks about the city of Toronto's consideration or contemplation of the provision of crack pipes to crack addicts and so-called safe smoking areas—it drives folks down where we're from, in Niagara, crazy when they read stuff like that, doesn't it, Mr. Bradley? They shake their heads. Again, that's not to say that there isn't some sound social policy behind this, although some really smart, hard-working people down where I come from have a hard time understanding what that might mean.

Ms. DiManno acknowledges: "It is not that I wish to see drug addicts busted, because the last thing a crackhead needs is the burden of a criminal record, or incarceration in penal institutions where drugs are so easily obtained."

Then she speaks of marijuana, and this, I've got to tell you—I read it just a few days ago—particularly impressed me after things that had been said during the summit that was organized by the Solicitor General and the various discussions around marijuana grow-ops.

Ms. DiManno writes: "But I was taken aback, on my last trip to Amsterdam—where soft drugs are legal, marijuana and hash for sale in drug cafés—at how very stupid much of the mellowed-out adult populace had become, so sluggish, slack, slothful. The potency of these 'soft drugs' has increased dramatically, as laced as they are with THC.

"This is not your father's ganja, as I discovered while on assignment for a story about legalizing drugs. (It took me three days to recover from my 'research'—can I help it if she was a glutton?—and I may very well be the

only Canadian reporter who has charged spliffs and hash brownies to her expense account.)"

**Mr. Levac:** Don't Bogart, my friend.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Levac says, "Don't Bogart, my friend."

**Mr. Levac:** Three days?

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Levac says, "Three days." He expresses an amazement, Mr. Levac does, the member from Brant.

That was one of the things that was indicated to us over and over again during the various background things that occurred to the introduction of Bill 128, and that is that the marijuana—look, Ms. DiManno could certainly be getting old.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** How old would she be, Peter?

**Mr. Kormos:** She's not as old as I am.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** How old are you, Peter?

**Mr. Kormos:** I'm not very old, but I'm not as young as I used to be. Our perspectives change, and what might have been, when we were younger, contemplative insight could, when we're older, turn into observations of slack and sloth, as Ms. DiManno made while in Amsterdam.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** So you're saying that she may be getting cynical?

**Mr. Kormos:** There seems to be some universality to the observation that the stuff being grown now, the pot being grown, presumably in these grow-ops like the one in Mr. Tascona's riding, the largest indoor grow-op operation in Canadian history, has enhanced levels of THC and that the effect of the drug is far greater than in your father's time.

Having noted that—because that's one of the arguments made about the need to shut down these grow-ops: They're growing heavy-duty weed. Last week, as well, came the results of a University of Saskatchewan research project conducted by a professor in the University of Saskatchewan's neuropsychiatry research unit, one Xia Zhang, who found that marijuana stimulates cell growth in regions of the brain associated with anxiety and depression and that this effect is the opposite of most legal and illicit drugs, such as alcohol, nicotine, heroin and cocaine. "Most drugs of abuse ... suppress neurogenesis," Zhang says. Marijuana promotes neurogenesis.

I have no doubt—

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** That makes you smarter?

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes, Mr. Zimmer. Mr. Zimmer said, "That makes you smarter?" I said, "Yes, Mr. Zimmer." He got himself into Hansard. A successful interjection, because I responded. You want to try again, Dave?

**Mr. Zimmer:** OK, we'll work it.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Zimmer responds, "OK, we'll work it." Mr. Zimmer, I'm pleased to say, has an intense interest in this debate around marijuana grow-ops, the research from the University of Saskatchewan, the observations by Rosie DiManno as she smoked herself silly in seedy taverns and cafés in Amsterdam on the tab of the poor shareholders of the *Toronto Star*. No wonder

they've got to sell off Harlequin Romance: Ms. DiManno smoked all of the profits.

I don't hesitate to agree that the marijuana grow-ops that the police have been busting are places that deserve to be busted. Now Mr. Tascona's Molson brewery grow-op has been eclipsed by the largest outdoor grow operation in Ontario history. And I hope the MPP for that riding will fess up and express the same pride about the superlative that Mr. Tascona has indicated about his community being number one.

2040

The problem is, this bill does nothing to assist the police to bust these operations. This bill does nothing to assist the police in busting up outlaw gangs. And, quite frankly, if we were going to focus on organized crime, other than starting with the Senate, we should perhaps be taking a look at why guys like John Roth from Nortel aren't doing serious jail time; why a guy like John Hunkin from CIBC isn't his cellmate.

Think about it, Mr. Zimmer. Those two people took more money from more people in a shorter period of time than any biker gang I've ever been aware of. Roth not only took their money; he took away their jobs.

Conrad Black, who probably won't even face criminal charges and never hear the clang of a cell door behind him—

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** Who? Who are we talking about here?

**Mr. Kormos:** Conrad "Tubby" Black.

**The Acting Speaker:** I would ask the member for Niagara Centre to bring his comments back to Bill 128, please.

**Mr. Kormos:** We're talking about organized crime. We're talking about organized crime and grow-ops. And how is it possible to talk about organized crime without talking about Conrad, Lord Black, and Barbara Amiel? There are a lot of Louis Vuitton purses involved here.

We heard concerns from the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police today about the incredible delays taking place in our courts, delays which are resulting in orgies of plea bargaining so that serious charges are being withdrawn in exchange for lesser criminal offences, and people are doing either modest levels of jail time or no jail time at all.

I regret having to tell the government, but telling the local hydroelectricity authority that Bill 128 allows that hydroelectricity authority to shut off the hydro to a property if it "has reason to believe that" there is "a condition ... in respect of the property that threatens or is likely to threaten ... the safety of any person" is not much comfort to the police who are trying to bust organized criminals and their grow operations.

**Mr. Leal:** Peter, we'll send in Jim Karygiannis.

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes. The member from Peterborough says, "We'll send in Jim Karygiannis."

**Mr. Zimmer:** What does he have to do with it?

**Mr. Kormos:** It was an interjection by Mr. Leal, the member from Peterborough.

**Mr. Leal:** Wasn't he sniffing out marijuana or something—Jim from Scarborough?

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes, he was. I respond to the interjection. Go ahead, Mr. Leal.

**Mr. Leal:** No, keep going.

**Mr. Kormos:** No, no. You're speaking of Jim who?

**Mr. Leal:** Karygiannis.

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes. The federal member of Parliament, I trust you mean.

I've never known of an electricity authority anywhere in Ontario or Canada that wouldn't shut off the electricity if it believed that there were an imminent danger, obviously as a result of—never mind the obvious illegality of using the jumper cables to bypass the meter, but the mere risk of it. I apologize for being cynical about this legislation, but for the life of me I don't understand why the amendment in Bill 128 to the Electricity Act is necessary for local electricity authorities to disconnect illegally connected electricity setups.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police told us about these backlogs in the courts, while criminals are being set free because of the plea bargaining that necessarily flows from the backlogs. The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police expressed concern about the two-for-one/three-for-one deals with respect to dead time when it came time to sentencing being given to serious criminals. Why are courts being increasingly generous with the trade-off of three to one for dead time? Because the dead time, the pre-sentence custody, is being served in overcrowded, understaffed correctional facilities which, in and of themselves impose, in the view of some pretty hardened judges—let's not kid ourselves; these judges aren't a bunch of bleeding-heart liberal nambypambies. They're pretty jaded. They don't do a lot of weeping when it comes time to sentencing. They've seen and heard it all. So when you've got a judge who is going to give a three-to-one for dead time because of the incredible hardship of the circumstances in the pre-trial pre-sentence custody, you're talking about some pretty sordid conditions. The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police was concerned about that. They were concerned that what this meant was that an increasingly larger number of increasingly more dangerous offenders end up doing their time in provincial institutions; they should have been grabbing pen time, but because of the trade-off, the three-to-one ratio, ended up in provincial reformatories—which will lead me up to the Ontario parole and probation board in short order.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police was concerned about remand after remand—and apparently not just remand but adjournment after adjournment—delays in matters going to trial. I know that this, from time to time, can be the result of a defence lawyer who simply hasn't got a clear calendar, but as often as not it's because of the clogged courts, the shortage of judges. You see, what happens is a judge, for instance—we're increasingly seeing trials split up: a day at a time, a day at a time, a day at a time, because with the shortage of provincial judges, we've got a judge who hears one day



of a trial and then isn't available because he has been booked already for a whole pile of other things for a month and a half, two months down the road.

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police told us today that in community after community after community there are, as often as not, more cops sitting in municipal courtrooms waiting to give evidence than there are out on the street catching criminals and protecting the public. That should be of concern to a government that says it wants to shut down marijuana grow ops. When I heard the parliamentary assistant express concern about the, in her mind, overly short sentences for people busted in marijuana grow-ops, I'd ask her to reflect on the observations made by the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police about plea bargaining, and plea bargaining down to lesser offences, which necessarily draw a lesser sentence to ratios of two to one and three to one for pre-sentence custody. I suggest to her that a crowded court system and a taxed police service is incredibly hard-pressed to hear evidence on sentencing, for instance, around the impact of the crime, not just on the immediate parties but on a broader cross-section of the community.

#### 2050

Nobody is disputing that crime should be detected and dealt with and prosecuted, but surely this government's Reefer Madness approach isn't at all helpful. If one is concerned, as one should be, about higher and higher levels of THC in street marijuana and the fact that smoking it or eating it may just knock somebody like Ms. DiManno flat on her butt, then we should be interested in controlling and regulating the substance, shouldn't we? The federal government, Paul Martin and the Liberals, have all but decriminalized it, all but legalized it. The police admit that they don't lay charges for small amounts of marijuana in people's possession. Again, whether you like it or not, that's the reality of it.

Mr. Dunlop made some remarkably shocking observations about the ability of a 16-year-old to access, as he explained it, the paraphernalia to manufacture or concoct crystal meth. I was in committee when the offer was made to the government to include crystal meth labs in the types of premises that would be the subject matter of Bill 128. It seems to me, in what I've read about crystal meth, that it doesn't come anywhere close to the category of a so-called soft drug or recreational drug.

But just as a kid can buy the paraphernalia—and I presume that means the machinery, the components, the vats and the beakers and so on; I'm not sure that means the actual chemicals. I don't know what those consist of or where they come from. It's trite to observe that people are buying marijuana on a daily basis. I mean, tonnes of it are being manufactured. If we witnessed tonnes of it being seized from Molson's in Joe Tascona's riding in his community of Barrie—was it tonnes, Mr. Tascona? If tonnes of it were seized from Molson's, and if the argument is valid—and I suspect that it is—that the seizures that are taking place so far are only the tip of the iceberg, that means that 10 times as many tonnes are being processed and being sold and being smoked. That should

be of concern, especially if there's legitimacy to the argument that there are exceptionally high levels of THC—dare I say, dangerously high levels of THC—although Xia Zhang, a researcher at the University of Saskatchewan's neuropsychiatry research unit, might suggest that the more THC there is, the more neurogenesis will flow. I don't know whether he is an advocate of higher levels of THC or not.

But it seems to me that if there is a concern, and a legitimate concern, about stronger and stronger marijuana—not your father's ganja, as Ms. DiManno states—then we should be all that much more interested in making sure that people accessing it are accessing marijuana that has a stable and consistent level of THC so that there are—what would I say?—no surprises. There are members of this chamber, of all parties, who have remarked to me about the incredible revenue potential that would flow from the taxation of a regulated and controlled marijuana. I suppose you could take the easy way out and just tax rolling papers. You could call it the Zig-Zag tax. The legislation would be called the Zig-Zag tax bill. But that doesn't even begin to address the reality that, as members of all three political parties have commented to me, Prohibition didn't work in the 1920s and it's not working now.

Remember what the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police said? On any given day there are more cops in any given community sitting in a courtroom waiting to give evidence than there are out on the street. I am amazed at what must be the thousands of police hours involved in the surveillance and apprehension of a marijuana grow-op and then the prosecution of it: lengthier and lengthier trials, conspiracy charges, jury trials, police officers sitting in courtrooms. It seems to me that there surely should be some setting of priorities here and that the shutting down of crystal meth labs—Ms. Horwath is in the Legislature, and we're told that Hamilton is one of the hot spots. This is a devastating drug. Niagara is a neighbour to Hamilton and is a border community, and is a location of perhaps a higher-than-usual presence of crystal meth. This stuff, we're told and have no reason to disbelieve, is incredibly addictive, instantly addictive, and is being manufactured in labs across Ontario. It's far, far more compact. We're not talking about bales of marijuana here; we're talking about relatively small amounts worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The suggestion is that somehow Canadians aren't smoking all this pot because it's being smuggled across the border and traded for guns. Now, I don't know, but it seems to me that every report is that marijuana stinks to high heaven and a bale of it is even stinkier, so I'm hard-pressed to understand how, down at the Niagara Falls Rainbow Bridge or the Peace Bridge in Fort Erie or down at the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor—because you're talking about tonnes, you're talking about bales of marijuana. You've got these trucks stinking to high heaven of pot, and Granny can't get across with a couple of tea towels she bought in Buffalo without being apprehended. She is overpaying duty and double taxation

as a fine for not reporting. Young Bad Boy Lastman—you read about it—couldn't smuggle a couple of pieces of jewellery into the country. We're not talking about bales of marijuana; we're talking about a couple of gold bracelets or something that young Bad Boy Lastman got popped at the airport for not declaring. He got whacked good, Lastman did. He was smuggling the stuff, Lastman was. It just boggles the mind to hear the suggestion that this stuff is being exported somehow, that Canadians are not smoking it. I've got a feeling that Canadians are smoking tonnes of marijuana every year. I've been told, and I don't know whether this is apocryphal or simply a myth, that marijuana is British Columbia's largest cash crop. I don't know.

2100

I'm not disputing that the police should be given the tools to detect, identify and apprehend crimes and arrest wrongdoers, but for this government to suggest that Bill 128 is about shutting down marijuana grow-ops is far from accurate. Giving the local electricity commission the power to disconnect an illegal connection does not shut down illegal grow-ops. Far from it. Increasing the fines—oh, my. You're going to increase the fines for people who use a building to grow pot. They don't expect to get caught. They don't expect to get busted. At the end of the day, apparently the huge amount of money that can be made more than compensates you for the fine, even the enhanced fines in Bill 128. Heck, people are prepared to risk going to jail for the amount of money being made.

I would ask for this government to take a more effective stance when it comes to dealing with illicit drug trafficking. It seems to a whole lot of people that one of the most effective ways of getting the biker gangs and organized crime out of the production of illicit pot is to take the profits out of it. If there's no profit to be made in it, they're not going to do it any more. Al Capone was busted by the repeal of Prohibition—a few income tax problems as well, and once again he had that much in common with members of the federal Parliament and the Canadian Senate. Think about it. Wait till the Gomery inquiry is over. Talk about organized crime. Marijuana grow-ops have got nothing on Adscam. Man, brown envelopes of thousands upon thousands of dollars being slipped across the tables of upscale, bourgeois Montreal bistros. There were very liberal amounts of money being exchanged among some very liberal people. Some of them probably even belonged to the Liberal Party. Some of them are said to be intimates of Liberal leaders, the Chrétien's of the world. Who knows, at the end of the day, whether the Minister of Finance in Mr. Chrétien's government will find himself caught in the net?

Here is a government that wants to pretend its Bill 128 is all about shutting down grow-ops when, on the same hand, it wants to shut down Ontario probation and parole. I pulled the annual report from 2003-04 for Ontario parole. There was a grant rate for parole applications of but 22.3%.

Ontario probation and parole officers and our parole board—you see, we have control over the standards and

policies implemented by the Ontario parole board in its consideration of parole requests, and we know that it's not just people doing time for unpaid fines. We know, because of the inappropriately low sentences that are resulting from the two-to-one, three-to-one trade-offs for pre-sentence custody, that some pretty serious offenders are serving time in provincial reformatories, provincial institutions; as well as everything from convicted murderers, convicted rapists, convicted child molesters who may be doing time for a subsequent offence, actually doing their pen time for that first offence. Well, the fact that their subsequent offence is a break and enter doesn't change the fact that they're a murderer, a child molester or a rapist, does it?

So the government that says it wants to shut down marijuana grow-ops by telling local electricity authorities that they can disconnect illegal connections also wants to shut down Ontario probation and parole. If that's not—

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm sure the members would want me to correct this, just because you want the record to reflect what it really is. The organization that looks after parole is called OPERB, the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board. It is totally separate from probation. Probation is a separate organization that looks after it. We're talking about parole and early release.

**The Acting Speaker:** I'm afraid that wasn't a point of order, but it was a point of information.

**Mr. Kormos:** That's why I've got the annual report right here, and, by God, the minister got this right. The board that he wants to shut down is the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board. But, you see, when you go to the government's own Web sites on probation and parole and you see the ads, the promotions, calling upon people to join the probation and parole service—because you see, Mr. Kwinter, there's a difference between the board and the people who do the supervision. I think our board has done a darned good job, and that's why I'm concerned that you want to shut it down. I think our probation and parole officers have done a darned good job, and that's why I'm concerned that you want to shut them down. Even worse, as if that wasn't enough, to add insult to injury, to whom do you want to transfer supervision of rapists and murderers, amongst others? To the National Parole Board, to the feds, to Ottawa, to the roller-coaster crew, the cotton-candy parole board.

People across the province are outraged and scared out of their wits at the proposition that Ontario is going to surrender its authority over parole to the feds. Their track record is dismal. Their track record is pathetic. Their track record is the result of good people being murdered. Ontario's probation and parole officers have told you not to do it; you don't care what they say. Well, today, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police told you not to do it and you don't seem to care what they say either, but then again, they've been asking you for even a handful of those 1,000 police officers that have been promised over and over again. They haven't got any of those.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** Coming.



**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Ruprecht is now on Hansard because his interjection was acknowledged. He says, "Coming." That's the whole problem, Mr. Ruprecht: It's always just around the corner. How many times has the announcement been made? We discovered today that 1,000 doesn't even come close, that police services that have scraped and saved to find the matching funds are up to around 1,600, 1,700 cops that they want and need.

**2110**

Police chiefs told us today that they can't even perform core police duties, never mind bust marijuana grow-ops, never mind shut down crystal meth labs. Police chiefs told us they can't perform core policing duties. They told us today that in a whole lot of police services, frauds under \$5,000 aren't even investigated—not a snowball's chance in Hades of the fraud artists getting busted. Break and enters? Not attended to. Auto thefts? So what? Call your insurance agent. Talk about carte blanche for criminals. And the government gets tough by telling grow operators that if they get caught using illegal electrical hookups, they're going to cut off the juice. Oh, for Pete's sake.

These guys are laughing. I'm talking about the bad guys. I'm talking about the grow operators. They're laughing up their sleeves. They're making millions of dollars off this stuff, which the feds have decriminalized. Police acknowledge they don't charge people for simple possession of small amounts of marijuana, and we know that Canadians are smoking tonnes of it every year. Good, bad or indifferent, that's the reality.

So the province of Ontario is going to get tough on crime, but police forces can't investigate serious frauds. The province of Ontario will get tough on crime, but police forces can't investigate break and enters. The province of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty and the Liberals are going to get tough on crime, but police forces candidly admit that car thefts are a matter between you and your insurance agent. To boot, the province embarks on the most significant contribution to the development of private policing that any jurisdiction has ever witnessed with its Bill 159.

Remember when we were afraid of privatized firefighting services? Remember when we were afraid of the privatization of health services and the inherent dangers in that? The police chiefs I talked to today agreed with me that the proliferation of private police services has everything to do with the undermining of public police services.

I mentioned at the beginning of my comments that there isn't a grow-op in the province that can't be known to the police in a matter of 30 minutes by flying overhead. Why aren't the police busting them? They don't have the resources. You are telling local hydro authorities to cut off your illegal electricity hookups. You're telling organized criminals running grow-ops that if they get caught and fined in your provincial offences court—which, mind you, don't have enough JPs to oversee the trials and don't have enough prosecutors to prosecute the trials—because, let's understand, that's

where this is going to be prosecuted, Mr. Tascona: the provincial offences courts. Come on. This is in provincial offences court, these offences. Tough on crime? We'll give you a ticket.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** To Wonderland.

**Mr. Kormos:** "To Wonderland," he says.

Tough on crime? Here's an offence known as "show up in front of the JP and cut a deal," because of the lineup of people around the block waiting for their trials to be heard, and the prosecutor has to plea-bargain away 80% of the cases.

So we're told today—

**Mr. Tascona:** True.

**Mr. Kormos:** Mr. Tascona says, "True."

It's offensive. Nobody in this chamber wants to see crime proliferate. The problem is that Bill 128 does nothing to facilitate the prosecution of criminal activity.

Let's understand what the bill tried to do. First, it tried to use building inspectors as shock troops. The provisions of the bill, as they were drafted, actually sent building inspectors in before the cops; they were going to be sent into booby-trapped grow operations on warrantless searches. Well, the building inspectors said, "No way, pal, not in a month of Sundays," and similar words to that effect.

To be fair, what the government has done now is say, "Well, when there's been a marijuana grow operation and the police so advise a building inspector," give or take, "the building inspector shall inspect the building." Well, the building inspector can inspect the building now, I put to you, and what's that got to do with shutting down grow-ops anyway? After the grow-op has been there, after the grow operators have rotted the insulation and the drywall with the humidity—what happened over at the Molson building?

**Mr. Tascona:** Methanol.

**Mr. Kormos:** So it's a useful, productive building?

**Mr. Tascona:** Corn.

**Mr. Kormos:** What happened with the grow-op? Didn't it destroy the building for any other useful purpose?

**Mr. Tascona:** No.

**Mr. Kormos:** "No," Mr. Tascona says.

**Mr. Tascona:** They're burning corn.

**Mr. Kormos:** The building inspector can inspect buildings that are unsafe already. That's their job. There was some nutty stuff about a registry: "Let's have a registry so we know which buildings had grow-ops in them." What you do is have a lawyer who asks the right questions on closing—or rather, before closing. You have a real estate broker or agent—Mr. Tascona knows about that—a lawyer who hopefully has error and omission insurance to cover him in the event that he or she neglects to ask about the use of the building.

You'll recall last night that there was the surprise amendment in Bill 159 that made it illegal for private investigators to seek out people in the Ontario witness protection program. It boggled the mind as to why the government would want that in Bill 159, because all it

did was signal for me that the Ontario witness protection program can't consist of very much if a private investigator with a laptop can track down people in a witness protection program. If anything, that observation should put us in fear of the well-being in those so-called protection programs. Then I realized the section was there so that it could be added to the list of the things the government has done—you know, the speaking notes, the Coles notes they pass out to my friends here in the rump.

**Interjection:** We speak for ourselves.

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes, they speak for themselves, as they read the Coles notes, the cheat sheet, the script: "This is what McGuinty's Liberals have done to make Ontario a safer place. We promise to put 1,000 cops on the street." That promise will make you safe all right. "If it will make you safer for us to promise it again, well, what the heck, we'll promise it again, and if you still don't feel safe, well, we'll promise it again. We're going to shut down marijuana grow-ops by letting local hydro authorities disconnect illegal hook-ups." Hot damn. That's a big one. We're really making progress with the underworld growing pot and making huge amounts of money. You know what? There was even the suggestion during some of the discussion around marijuana grow-ops that if we shut down marijuana grow-ops, we'll shut down the flow of handguns into Canada.

2120

**Mr. Dunlop:** That's true. That's what I'm told.

**Mr. Kormos:** That's what Dunlop was told. Of course, he didn't believe it. You don't believe in the Easter bunny any more, do you, Garfield?

**Mr. Tascona:** Don't go that far.

**Mr. Kormos:** Tascona says. The problem is that this government has been missing in action when it comes to people being shot on a daily basis in Toronto. There are things that can and should be done now, not promises, not speeches, not the Dalton McGuinty, "I wring my hands. Oh, I feel your pain." Another dead Ontarian, "I feel your pain."

We're told from any number of sources that there are young people sporting handguns, showing them off, walking around.

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** Register them.

**Mr. Kormos:** Oh, please, Murdoch, you know darn well criminals don't register their guns. The kinds of people who register their guns are not likely to be engaged in drive-by shootings, but farmers working too hard to be out at 2 in the morning whacking people in SUVs. His gun is registered. The gangster's isn't.

A little less by way of, "We feel your pain," and a little more real action, because the good advice has been there. People from community after community have identified things this government can do now to deal with the issue of the proliferation of handguns and their lethal use, especially by young people.

I'm going to vote against Bill 128. It's a relatively benign, harmless bit of legislation, but we're also not going to pretend that it's going to help the police shut

down or prosecute a single grow-op in the province of Ontario. It's going to do nothing to help the cops shut down crystal meth labs and cocaine dealers and the likes of the organized crime that is making huge bucks getting people addicted to those drugs.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments? The member for Brant was up first.

**Mr. Levac:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker—not that I would ever get in the way of the senior member here.

If it weren't for the fact that there was an awful lot of consultation that happened, resulting in some serious changes that were offered, consultations about what has been happening with grow-ops in our province, the characterization that has being made, that our entire province has gone to hell in a handbasket, would almost be laughable. It's unfortunate that the good work of previous governments, including the NDP, the Tories and ourselves, to evolve a system that is trusted in our province is being maligned in the way it has been. It's unfortunate that the work that is being done by all members in this place to try to co-operate with the citizens in each of our municipalities is being maligned the way it is. It's unfortunate, because this is a problem not just in the big centres; this is a problem that has existed for a long time, in many small communities.

My first task when I was elected in 1999 was to meet, as the critic, with several law officials in cities across the province, and I met with my own. Some of the city councillors asked for resolutions to deal with grow-op operations. I commend the minister for the work he's doing. In two short years, we've got a grow-ops opportunity here to send a message, and it's not just provincial. We've got all levels of government firing on the same pistons now to deal with this issue. We are signalling to the criminals out there that it's not going to be accepted in this province, in this country, in the municipalities where this problem is proliferated, not just in a whole municipality but in tiny little boroughs and communities where they've never had to face this before. Now that they are, we're signalling loud and clear that grow-ops are not acceptable in Ontario.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** I'm surprised to hear that kind of commentary from the member for Brant, for whom I have a great deal of respect. I know he's interested in these kinds of issues, but he knows that what he was just saying doesn't really stand up to scrutiny. We will support this legislation, but to suggest that it's going to have an impact on grow-ops in the province of Ontario is deceiving the public, really. Essentially, that's the bottom line here. This is not going to have a real impact.

We know that there's an epidemic with respect to grow operations in the province of Ontario. The problem, in my view, lies with federal legislation and the courts. I see it in my own riding, where we have people who are caught operating these kinds of facilities getting off with a slap on the wrist. That's the approach of the bench, and that's not going to solve the problem.



If you talk to US officials, Canada is the primary source of marijuana going into the United States, and Ontario has become the biggest supplier. We're outstripping British Columbia. To suggest that this is going to resolve the problem is sad, really. I don't want to laugh at it, because it's a very serious problem, because organized crime is playing a significant role with respect to grow-ops in this province.

I didn't have the opportunity to respond to the member for Brant earlier. I know he was an outstanding critic for corrections. But we heard the minister here today talking about the parole board and saying that there are no dangerous offenders in the Ontario corrections system. He would know, as a former critic—and I would suggest to the minister that perhaps he should spend a couple of nights in the Don Jail. To suggest to the people of Ontario that we do not have any dangerous offenders in our corrections system in Ontario is truly unfortunate.

**Ms. Horwath:** I also want to rise tonight and indicate my significant disappointment with this piece of legislation. Again, it's not about what's here; it's about what's not here. I think that's what members tonight are expressing: their disappointment that this government once again had an opportunity to do something significant in this regard in the province of Ontario but instead decided to do something quite flimsy and quite unsubstantial, quite nondescript.

Instead of doing some of the things that the police chiefs of Ontario talked to our caucus about today, some of the real, substantive things that need to be done to change the way our communities are looking in regard to crime, including grow-ops and other kinds of criminal activities, instead of doing those kinds of things, making those kinds of changes, the government has once again decided to put out this bill, which, as you've heard, neither of the opposition parties is particularly concerned about opposing. Why? Because there's nothing really substantive there to oppose.

Unfortunately, the other side of the picture is that there's nothing there to substantially agree with or to support either, and that's the crux of the problem with this particular waste of time in terms of this legislation and its time through the House. We're in the situation where we're probably going to say, "Yes, fine. Have your Bill 128." The unfortunate thing is that the government is going to spin it out as some major opportunity to take all the photo ops in the world, to pretend they're really doing something about the significant problems that exist in community after community across this province in regard to marijuana grow operations, not only in terms of what they do to communities and to families and to neighbourhoods, but also in terms of the broader impact of those kinds of operations on crime and the drug trade. It's a sad, sad situation.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** As I now have the responsibility of being the House leader for the government, I have to ask this question. I know my friend from Barrie must be wondering and I know my friend who frequents Owen

Sound must be wondering. If the Conservative Party is going to vote for the bill and if the New Democratic Party is going to vote for the bill, and if we've have had first reading, a full debate on second reading, committee hearings, and now we're on third reading, I'm wondering how it is that they would want to continue this debate. We're all in agreement. Let's be friends tonight.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I'd say to my friends Mr. Yakabuski and Mr. Miller—by the way, I had the pleasure of serving with both of their fathers in this House. It's nice to see both of them here. Good people. I can't put words in other people's mouths, but in those days there wasn't even a third reading of a bill of this kind. It was kind of on a nod back in those days.

I'm thinking now, in a sense of congeniality and of co-operation, that both the opposition parties—I know my friend Bill Murdoch would be saying this—should probably bring this to a vote at an appropriate time, which is soon, and that this should probably conclude the debate, that, having heard the eloquent member for Niagara Centre put forward his many interesting arguments, having heard Garfield Dunlop, my good friend, put forward his information, and the government members, we're now ready for a vote on this. I would think it would be absolutely great to have that.

I should tell the member as well, because he doesn't like cable TV, that John Tory is on Rogers Cable TV right now. I've got to ask your opinion on cable TV.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Niagara Centre has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Kormos:** To the very learned government House leader, who is the most senior member of this chamber, I tell you that I'm proud of being as collaborative and co-operative an opposition House leader as you've ever witnessed in your 30 to 40 years here. Look, I have feelings too. It pains me for you to speak of me with that kind of innuendo. I hope that by tomorrow, I'm going to overcome these feelings, but for the moment, I want you to know that you've cut to the core.

You also, as a senior member of this chamber, recall that more legislation got passed when there were not rigid time limits on the length of debate and when statutory or standing order time allocation didn't exist, than gets passed in a chamber that has time limits on speeches, that has time allocation provided for in the standing orders, and where the government is heavy-handed around committees and participation by members in the debate. I look forward to the time when you, as government House leader, can convince your caucus to restore some of that period of civility.

Insofar as cable television goes, I just say: satellite, satellite, satellite. The cable companies have ripped you off long enough with bad enough quality television that it's not worth another minute of your time.

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you very much. It being almost 9:35 p.m., this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

*The House adjourned at 2132.*

## CONTENTS

**Tuesday 18 October 2005**

### THIRD READING

#### **Law Enforcement and Forfeited**

**Property Management Statute Law  
Amendment Act, 2005, Bill 128,**

*Mr. Kwinter*

Mr. Kwinter .....	141
Mrs. Sandals .....	142, 144, 153
Mr. Miller .....	143
Mr. Kormos .....	143, 152, 154, 161
Mr. Delaney .....	144
Mr. Dunlop .....	144, 154
Mr. Tascona .....	153
Ms. Horwath .....	153, 161
Mr. Levac .....	160
Mr. Runciman .....	160
Mr. Bradley .....	161
Debate deemed adjourned .....	161

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

**Mardi 18 octobre 2005**

### TROISIÈME LECTURE

**Loi de 2005 modifiant des lois en ce  
qui concerne l'exécution de la loi  
et l'administration des biens  
confisqués, projet de loi 128,**

*M. Kwinter*

Débat présumé ajourné .....	161
-----------------------------	-----





No. 6A

N° 6A

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Wednesday 19 October 2005

Mercredi 19 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 19 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 19 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### LIBRARY SERVICES

**Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound):** As the member from Kitchener-Waterloo mentioned on Monday, in June 2005 this government cut \$1.2 million from their funding of library services; \$700,000 of that came from the Ontario Library Service budget. The OLS provides valuable services and resources to public libraries across Ontario. One of these services is the interlibrary loan and delivery service that connects public libraries across the province. This helps link library collections of all sizes in all communities, making it possible for libraries to share their resources. As you can imagine, this funding cut will have serious effects on small rural and northern libraries, reducing, among other things, their ability to provide interlibrary loan services, something their patrons rely on.

I was recently presented with letters from the Friends of the Hanover Public Library. In their letter they said, "We, your constituents, need your help! The budget cuts will impact on the quality of service given to the library patrons of Grey-Bruce. This will be felt intensely, especially as applied to the interlibrary loan service that our small rural libraries depend on because of owning fewer books than the large city libraries. Last year our Hanover library alone was involved in transfers of over 3,000 items." They went on to say that "when decisions are made in big cities, there is little concern or knowledge regarding rural needs."

While I acknowledge that this is Ontario Public Library Week, the libraries in my riding are feeling short-changed. Again, this government is not respecting the residents of rural and northern Ontario.

I will deliver these letters to the minister.

#### POLICE SERVICES

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Ontario's chiefs of police made some startling revelations about the critical state of policing in the province of Ontario. The underresourcing and understaffing of police services across this province is alarming and puts communities, their residents and police officers at considerable risk.

I met with, amongst others, deputy chiefs from Niagara Regional Police, where we learned that because

of the incredibly and inappropriately low level of staffing, frauds under \$5,000 simply aren't investigated, and that should there be a break and enter at your home, don't expect don't expect a cop to show up. We earlier had been told that car thefts are not a matter to involve the police but simply a matter between the victim and his or her insurance adjuster.

We learned that in any given community on any given day there are probably more police officers sitting in courtrooms waiting to give evidence than there are out on the street patrolling and protecting citizens and conducting investigations.

We learned that police services across this province, Niagara Regional included, can't even perform core services, never mind undertake those sorely needed and incredibly labour-intensive special investigations dealing with things like, for instance, very dangerous crystal meth labs and drug trafficking, among other things.

We learned that the stress and dangers of policing are putting police officers at risk; the understaffing is putting communities at risk.

#### ROAD SAFETY

**Mr. Vic Dhillon (Brampton West-Mississauga):** I'm pleased to rise today in support of an initiative by the McGuinty government that is of great importance to the constituents of Brampton West-Mississauga: Bill 169, the transit and road safety bill. Bill 169 will improve safety for pedestrians, construction workers and all drivers. If passed, this bill would also improve transit and help ease congestion on roads and highways across the province.

Illegal taxi operators are a major concern in my riding and throughout the GTA. Bill 169 would crack down on illegal taxis by creating a specific Highway Traffic Act offence for transporting passengers for compensation without the proper permits. We take this issue of transporting illegal passengers very seriously, and that is why the fines will be increased. The fines for this offence would range from \$300 to \$20,000. Driver's licence suspension and plate denial upon renewal would be applied if the fine is not paid.

This is not an issue of changing municipal licensing regimes but of public safety. Over the past five years, 15,000 pedestrians have been hurt or killed while crossing the road in Ontario. In 2004, 26 people were killed in collisions in the region of Peel. It is estimated that almost half of all collisions involve speeding.

If passed, this bill would target some of the worst driving offences, giving officers throughout the province the tools they need to enforce traffic laws and help protect the most vulnerable people in our society—our children and seniors.

#### DONALD WARDEN

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** I rise to pay tribute to Chief Donald Warden of the Wasaga Beach Fire Department on being named as Fire Chief of the Year in the full-time fire chief category by the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs at the CAFC's Fire Rescue Canada 2005 training and educational symposium in Richmond, BC. Chief Warden was recognized for being instrumental in the success of CAFC programs, including work on the government relations committee that undertook to promote safety-related programs at the national level through government legislation. Chief Warden has also served as president, vice-president and treasurer of the national association.

Don first began his career in Wasaga Beach in 1974, starting out as a probationary firefighter and town building inspector. He quickly rose through the ranks and became fire chief in 1980, and he continues in this position today while also taking on the responsibilities of director of emergency services for the town. Don serves as the Georgian sector representative at Emergency Management Ontario and as a member of EMO's provincial advisory committee. But I'm sure he gets most of his enjoyment from his role as coach of the Wasaga Beach bantam rep hockey team and as the convenor of the annual Hi-Vol charity golf tournament that's been raising money for local charities for almost 20 years.

Don has also been very supportive of my efforts and those of my colleague the member for Waterloo–Wellington to protect the rights of professional full-time firefighters to volunteer and provide their expertise to their local fire brigades on their own free time. I sincerely appreciate Don's support.

On behalf of my fellow residents in Wasaga Beach, I once again extend my congratulations to Don for many more years of success as our fire chief.

#### HOSPICE CARE

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** Decades ago there was a doctor named Bob Kemp, who was a family doctor in my riding of Stoney Creek. He used to make many house calls, and he saw first-hand the emotional and physical toll that terminal illness could take on a family, trying to cope with somebody dying and still running the household. So after he had delivered medical treatment, he would then, before he left, help to wash the dishes or maybe make some beds, because he realized that physical help was so badly needed.

At that time, the seed of his dream of a residential hospice was planted firmly in his mind, and he spent decades trying to raise the money to create a residential

hospice. He donated his own home when he retired for a day hospice program, and then Iris Berryman, a retired teacher, donated her land for a future residential hospice. But there was still a piece missing. Two weeks ago, that piece came in a \$115-million funding announcement by our government to create a network of 30 residential hospices in this province and to provide home care and home visits. This will allow people to die with dignity in their own homes or in a home-like setting and represents a societal shift: money coming out of expensive hospitals and into affordable settings where people want to be.

As Dr. Bob said that day—he's now 92 years old—he knows he will live to see his dream become a reality.

1340

#### QUEENSWAY CARLETON HOSPITAL

**Mr. John R. Baird (Nepean–Carleton):** Today I rise with yet another example of where the federal government is failing Ontario taxpayers. Taxpayers know it was Paul Martin, as finance minister, who reduced federal spending on health care in Ontario from 18% of our health care budget down to just 11% before he was fired by Jean Chrétien. Then he expects a pat on the back when he increases it to 14%. I'm sorry, Mr. Martin, people just aren't buying it.

Now he has targeted one Ottawa area hospital for special treatment. The Queensway Carleton Hospital in Nepean was built 30 years ago on land owned by the federal government. Over the years they've paid about a million dollars in rent to the feds. Now, as the renewal of the lease comes forward, Paul Martin wants to jack it up to full market rent. For this hospital, that could be millions of dollars.

MP Pierre Poilievre and I have launched a campaign to convince Mr. Martin and the federal Liberals to do the right thing and rent the land to the hospital for \$1. If they don't, the hospital could have to fire up to 40 nurses according to the former chair of the board. Thus far, Martin and the federal Liberals aren't budging.

It would be wrong for the province to have to fatten the coffers of a government with an anticipated \$10-billion surplus rather than hiring more nurses and reducing wait times.

Conservatives are onside with the hospital's request. New Democrats federally and some even provincially are onside with the plan. Even Ottawa West–Nepean Liberal MPP Jim Watson supports the plan for \$1 a year.

Angry taxpayers can visit [www.freeourhospital.ca](http://www.freeourhospital.ca) and sign the petition to force the Martin Liberals off this mean-spirited scheme. It's never too late to do the right thing.

#### RUN FOR THE CURE

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa–Orléans):** Earlier this month, I joined over 150 people in running the third annual Blackburn Hamlet Run for the Cure. The five-kilometre run was a huge success, raising over \$11,000



for the fight against breast cancer. Organized by Lynn Sewell, the event started three years ago with only about 80 runners, but has grown every year since. This year's festivities included a raffle, as well as volunteers who were selling pink bracelets in support of the cause.

It was great to see so many people running for this great cause, including two 13-year-old girls who ran the entire course in only 24 minutes, just under the best time for the day. There were many other memorable moments throughout the day. I saw several women who wore pink shirts as they ran. These women are breast cancer survivors who have overcome this disease and are now leading the charge to raise money and awareness.

I was also touched to see Jane Sewell running the race, coming out to support the cause and helping to organize it. I even saw Cindy Dalcourt-Taylor and her entire family running in memory of their beloved grandmother who passed away from the disease.

The day was a huge success, and I'm already looking forward to next year's run.

I would like to say a special thank you to all the organizers, volunteers, business donors and participants for making this year's run bigger and better than ever.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** Over the past two years, our government has been working hard to reform our health care system. I'm proud to inform this House that in my riding of Willowdale these reforms are working.

Just last month, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care approved the North York General Hospital to perform an additional 257 cataract procedures and 166 hip and knee surgeries and joint replacements. As well, North York General Hospital was approved for a further 416 hours of MRI procedures.

Our government's wait time strategy is working. We are proud of producing real, tangible results. Our government is demonstrating our commitment to quality by giving the people of Ontario the power to review wait times across the province and by making this information available on the Internet. Citizens can now make informed choices about health care procedures.

### STROKE CARE SYSTEM

#### SYSTÈME DE PRÉVENTION DES ATTAQUES D'APOPLEXIE

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** I rise today to congratulate the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for his announcement yesterday concerning the Ontario stroke strategy. The news that our province will now have 24 stroke prevention clinics is good news for all Ontarians, and the fact that the Hawkesbury and District General Hospital has now been recognized as a stroke prevention clinic is tremendously good news for the people of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

Je suis ravi d'annoncer que l'Hôpital Général de Hawkesbury a été désigné comme clinique de prévention des accidents cardiovasculaires. C'est une excellente nouvelle pour les gens de Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

As the minister pointed out, stroke is the third leading cause of death in Ontario and the leading cause of disability in this country. Here in Ontario, 16,000 people per year suffer strokes and 90,000 people are living with the effects of strokes. I'm proud that this government is taking steps to reduce these numbers and to provide better care and support for those who have suffered strokes.

I am pleased that the residents of my riding will now have access to stroke prevention services through the Hawkesbury clinic. On behalf of the citizens of my riding, permit me to thank the minister for this welcome news.

### VISITORS

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It is my great honour to introduce a delegation from Calabria, one of the most beautiful parts of Italy. It's the birthplace of my colleague from Trinity-Spadina, Rosario Marchese; of the Sorbara family; and of Mario Sergio. Benvenuto.

I would like to say we have with us today the mayor—the sindaco—of Serra San Bruno, Signor Pietro Loiacono, and the provincial member, Signor Bruno Censore. Benvenuto a Canada e Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you, Minister. That, of course, is not a point of order, but we want to warmly welcome our guests.

### LEGISLATIVE INTERNS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** With us today in the Speaker's gallery are the 2005-06 Ontario legislative interns. We have Ana Curic, Jon Fears, Nicole Goodman, Jacqueline Locke, Daniel O'Brien, Marc Peverini, Meghan Warby and Brian Wettlaufer. Welcome.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I wonder if you would indulge me that we have unanimous consent to double their wages.

**The Speaker:** Do we have unanimous consent? I heard a no.

### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated October 19, 2005, of the standing committee on government agencies. Pursuant to

standing order 106(e)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### 1376037 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2005

Mr. Murdoch moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act to revive 1376037 Ontario Inc.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Pursuant to standing order 84, this bill stands referred to the standing committee on regulations and private bills.

### GENDER-BASED PRICE DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITION ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005

### INTERDISANT LA DISCRIMINATION DES PRIX FONDÉE SUR LE SEXE

Mr. Berardinetti moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 9, An Act to prohibit price discrimination on the basis of gender/ Projet de loi 9, Loi interdisant la discrimination des prix fondée sur le sexe.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Does the member have a brief statement?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** Briefly, this is the reintroduction of a bill that was introduced in the spring. The bill prohibits price discrimination on the basis of gender. Individuals who face price discrimination on the basis of gender may file a complaint to which part IV of the Human Rights Code applies, or the person may commence an action in the Superior Court of Justice. Persons who practise price discrimination on the basis of gender may be prosecuted.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** At the request of my good friend from Niagara Centre, I'm introducing this motion. I move that, pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 19, 2005, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour will say "aye."

All opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1353 to 1358.*

**The Speaker:** All those in favour will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Baird, John R.	Jackson, Cameron	Qaadri, Shafiq
Barrett, Toby	Jeffrey, Linda	Racco, Mario G.
Bartolucci, Rick	Kennedy, Gerard	Runciman, Robert W.
Bentley, Christopher	Klees, Frank	Ruprecht, Tony
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kular, Kuldip	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Smith, Monique
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Smitherman, George
Caplan, David	Leal, Jeff	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Colle, Mike	Levac, Dave	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	Marsales, Judy	Tory, John
Delaney, Bob	Martiniuk, Gerry	Van Bommel, Maria
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Watson, Jim
Duguid, Brad	McNeely, Phil	Wilkinson, John
Duncan, Dwight	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wilson, Jim
Dunlop, Garfield	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Witmer, Elizabeth
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Munro, Julia	Wong, Tony C.
Fonseca, Peter	Parsons, Ernie	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gerretsen, John	Peters, Steve	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Peterson, Tim	Zimmer, David
Hoy, Pat	Phillips, Gerry	

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please rise one at a time.

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Kormos, Peter	Murdoch, Bill
Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Prue, Michael
Horwath, Andrea	Martel, Shelley	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 59; the nays are 8.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### ACADEMIC TESTING

#### ÉPREUVES ACADÉMIQUES

**Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education):** I rise in the House today to recognize the ongoing hard work of Ontario's students, teachers, parents, education workers and everyone involved in the province's publicly funded education system. Thanks to their dedication and commitment, student achievement is up among our elementary schools in province-wide reading, writing and mathematics for the second year in a row. This follows several years when student achievement was effectively stalled. We are now on a trend of improvement for our youngest students in the province of Ontario.

The new results of the grade 3 and grade 6 EQAO tests—which is the testing authority in Ontario—for the 2004-05 year show that an average of 62% of Ontario's students are meeting or exceeding the provincial stan-



dards in reading, writing and mathematics. That's a significant 8.15% increase from the average of 54% who were meeting the standard in 2002-03 under the previous government.

For the first time, the province has set a clear target of 75% of 12-year-olds able to meet the provincial standard in province-wide reading, writing and math tests by 2007-08. Age 12 is a critical juncture, a tipping point in a child's life. If students by that age become convinced they cannot succeed at school, dropping out becomes a much more attractive option, and a life can be thwarted by that lack of early accomplishment. Reducing class sizes in the primary grades, providing training for teachers and an atmosphere of peace and stability are critical to improving literacy and numeracy skills for Ontario's youngest students.

We have worked with Ontario school boards to create, for the first time, a coordinated effort right across the province to help students reach their potential. In grade 3 reading, the number of our English-language students reaching the provincial standard is up five percentage points to 59%, compared to last year; up 3 points to 61% in writing; up two points to 66% in math.

Results for grade 6 English-language students are also very encouraging. In reading, student achievement has risen by five percentage points to 63%; in writing, up five points to 59%; and in mathematics, up three points to 60%.

Aux tests de troisième année, le nombre d'élèves des écoles de langue française ayant respecté la norme provinciale est resté le même en lecture. En écriture, il a augmenté de cinq points, pour se situer à 68% par rapport à l'année dernière, et il a augmenté de deux points en mathématiques, pour se situer à 57%.

Les résultats des élèves des écoles de langue française aux tests de sixième année ont aussi été très encourageants. En lecture, le rendement des élèves a augmenté de quatre points de pourcentage, pour atteindre 67%; en écriture, il a augmenté de deux points, pour se situer à 70%; et en mathématiques, il a augmenté de quatre points, pour atteindre 74%. C'est un bon résultat pour les élèves francophones.

We gave Ontario's 1.1 million primary and junior students more individualized attention, and to help improve student achievement, the McGuinty government introduced the Every Child strategy. This strategy includes:

- smaller class sizes for JK to grade 3 students, working to a real cap of 20 students in 2007-08;

- better training for literacy and numeracy for at least four teachers and each principal in all elementary schools—over 20,000 teachers in total;

- 2,000 new specialist teachers in key areas such as literacy and numeracy, music, the arts and physical education, approximately 600 of which are in place in this school year; and

- new textbooks, library books and learning resources for elementary students.

In addition we have a unique Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, led by Avis Glaze, bringing together many of

our best and brightest educators in the province to enhance teacher skills, develop school leadership, target resources and coordinate efforts of all levels of learning.

As this year's results demonstrate, elementary students are beginning to reap the benefits of our education strategies and to improve in important subject areas. There is an important deeper trend as well: English-as-a-second-language students are improving at a faster rate than students in general. In fact, almost all the increase is coming from the weakest readers becoming better, not simply from those who were on the margin.

But we very strongly realize that there is much more to be done to help those who continue to struggle, especially at the high school level. This year's results for English-language grade 9 in academic math remain steady at 68%. Students in applied courses show improvements for a second year in a row, but the percentage they reached is disturbingly low. The results are up only one percentage point, to 27%. This is a course that is now being replaced with a course that is more suited to the talents of the students affected.

Les résultats des élèves des écoles de langue française ont diminué de trois points de pourcentage, pour se situer à 24%.

Just last week, the final report in a series of reports from a study led by Queen's University professor Alan King was released. It tracked the progress of high school students between 1999 and 2003-04 and warned of high dropout rates and repeatedly called for government intervention. The King report confirms that as many as 48,000 students in that final year, about 30% of all students, could not acquire enough credits for graduation.

Every single year between 1999 and 2003, Dr. King was pointing to the problem while the Tory Conservatives sat back and let the dropout rate climb year after year without taking action. This government refuses to let students wait. Our student success program at the high school level is starting to turn around that unacceptable dropout rate. We are helping to turn more struggling students into successful graduates. The number of students who graduate after five years in high school has gone up from 68% in 2003-04 to an estimated 72% in 2004-05. The number of students who graduate after four years has risen from 56% in 2003-04 to 60% in 2004-05.

Our government firmly believes that excellence in public education is critical not only to students but to our province's future. We're starting to see a turnaround, and that is encouraging news. These improvements demonstrate that with the right support, Ontario's students and publicly funded education system are capable of achieving our ambitious goals for student achievement. But we need everyone's help, support and commitment. I encourage everyone in this House to get involved and stay in touch with your local school communities. We need the lines of both communication and support to be open.

Our strategies in education are delivering results for students. We will continue to invest wisely in Ontario's publicly funded education system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown): Responses?**

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** Before I respond to the minister's statement, I want to say that I and my colleagues in the official opposition celebrate the improved results of the standardized tests. We want to give credit to the teachers, the principals and the students who applied themselves to the business of learning.

I want to read into the record the following quote: "Eight years after standardized tests hit Ontario, there is mounting proof the scores—including the latest batch due today—are providing schools with a power tool to pinpoint how to help children learn, says Premier Dalton McGuinty's special adviser on education."

I want to remind the minister that it was in fact the previous government that implemented the tests that we're celebrating today. I want to remind the minister that he and his colleagues, including the Premier, voted against having standardized tests. If it wasn't for these standardized tests, he would not be able to benchmark the progress that our students are making in this province today.

1410

While this report is encouraging—because we do recognize the trend that, by the way, began before this year. The trend of improvements, contrary to what this minister would have us believe, didn't start yesterday. It started already under the previous government, and we celebrate that as well. What is sobering about this report as well is that there are still some 53,000 students in grade 6 who have not reached the provincial standard in reading skills and some 58,800 students who have not reached the provincial standard in writing skills and mathematics. That was the reason we implemented these tests, to ensure that we could pinpoint where the improvements need to take place.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the work of the EQAO. Charged with the responsibility of administering these tests province-wide as an independent agency, their work is vital to ensure that the goal of these provincial tests is achieved. I commend them on their work today.

It is because of these standardized tests that the government, schools, principals and parents can focus in on where we have to make improvements in our education system, that we can put the appropriate resources behind the teaching of these classes and into the classrooms. That was the purpose of these tests that this minister, the Premier and that government opposed while they were in opposition. Today he welcomes them, and we celebrate this about-face on behalf of this government. Thank you for recognizing that the previous government, in its wisdom, implemented standardized province-wide tests to improve education in this province.

It's also because of these tests that we can now debunk some of the urban legends that have in the past caused us to write off certain schools or groups within schools for economic or cultural demographics. There are examples in this report published today of schools where there is a very high multicultural population, where the general

income levels are lower than in many areas of the province, where there is a very high percentage of immigrants and where they have results that are above the provincial average. That is to the leadership credit of principals and teachers and teaching teams in these schools that have made it their business to ensure that students are motivated and that we put the necessary resources in place to motivate these students.

So I would call on this government to take the results of this test and deal with it in a positive way, not for partisan purposes, but to recognize the work of the teachers, recognize the value of these standardized tests, and continue to work based on the foundation that the previous government has put in place in the education system in this province.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** New Democrats are not against a rigorous curriculum. We are in favour of a curriculum that speaks to the ability of each student and is appropriate to their age level. In this regard, we are in favour of holding the Liberal government accountable to the promise they made of establishing a curriculum committee to introduce curriculum changes, pedagogical changes, that would make for better education of our students. We have yet to see that promise.

But I want to say, mes amis libéraux, this is all about politics and not pedagogy. This is a government that is so desperate to show improvements that they are going to bring forth cooked statistics to convince us they are keeping a promise that they are in fact breaking.

This is a continuation of a Conservative testing regime. The difference is that the Liberals are doing it, oh, so much more efficiently. The Tories wanted to show improvements in test scores. They started the manipulation of the numbers. You Liberals promised that 75% of Ontario students will reach the provincial standard, and behold, the numbers are up.

Let me explain how you Liberals have done that. Students had a limited time to answer questions under the old regime. This year's instructions to test administrators state that "students may take the time they need to complete the section, as long as it is in one continuous sitting," i.e., they have as much time as they need to write the test.

Second, the test is half as long. The length of the test went from over 10 hours last year to six hours this year. The minister himself directly intervened to make this change happen. He announced this change, not the EQAO, speaking to the political interference of this minister and this government.

Third, students are allowed to use calculators. Grades 3 and 6 students this year were allowed to use calculators for the entire marked test, including multiple choice questions. In the past, students were not permitted to use calculators for the multiple-choice questions.

Fourth, the teachers who mark the test have told us that the new test is not only easier, but that they have been encouraged to give higher marks where there is doubt between two possible grades. Unfortunately,



teachers who mark the tests are forced to sign confidentiality agreements, raising questions of transparency.

**Hon. Marie Bountrogianni (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, minister responsible for democratic renewal):** You're wrong, Rosario.

**Mr. Marchese:** The Tories, Madame la ministre, say that the Liberals have dumbed down the curriculum. If this were so, then students would do worse on the standardized tests, not better. The Tories are wrong. They haven't dumbed down the curriculum. They, the Liberals, have played with the test. They have played politics with the test.

McGuinty should stop announcing fake improvements and actually improve classroom learning.

**Hon. Mrs. Bountrogianni:** You just can't stand it.

**Mr. Marchese:** Students need, Madame Bountrogianni, educational assistance, uno; dos, special education teachers; three, they need special education support that we haven't had in two years. They need ESL teachers and they need librarians. This minister, when he was in opposition, said we need more of them; in fact, we have fewer under a Liberal regime than we did under these fine people here to my right.

What they need are physical education teachers, not an extra 20 minutes on top of what they're doing. Seventy per cent of classrooms don't have physical education teachers. Fix that, Mr. Kennedy. And what we need are music teachers and art teachers. If we did that, Monsieur le ministre et mes amis libéraux, that would be an improvement.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Tim Peterson (Mississauga South):** On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: In our audience today we have a gentleman from northern Ontario, the founder of Canoe Canada Outfitters, the largest canoe outfitter in Atikokan and a shining example of self-industry and self-promotion. He is also a 12-year president of NOTO, the Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters Association. Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to acknowledge Bud Dickson.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** That was not a point of privilege nor a point of order, but welcome, Mr. Dickson.

1420

#### ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent for all parties in the Legislature to speak for up to five minutes to recognize Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Bradley has asked for unanimous consent for all parties to have five minutes to speak to Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** I rise to speak on an important and sobering topic. Today marks the second annual Elder

Abuse Awareness Day in Ontario. Although I am pleased that our province recognizes such a day, I am saddened that the need still exists. Elder abuse is often described as a hidden crime. Today, across Ontario, light is being shed on this problem.

The vast majority of Ontario seniors are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve, but for some Ontario seniors, elder abuse is a fact of life. Elder abuse can come in many forms: financial, physical or emotional abuse, or neglect. Elder abuse is often perpetrated by someone in a position of trust, such as a family member or a close friend. That is why this government will continue to work with seniors' organizations and leaders and many sectors of Ontario society to address this serious issue.

Ontario's strategy to combat elder abuse is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse. Seven regional elder abuse consultants are working in support of the strategy's three priorities: staff training, public education and coordination of local services to help seniors who are being abused. Our consultants are helping support the good work of more than 50 local elder abuse coordinating committees that are working to ensure local agencies pull together to address this problem. Staff and front-line agencies serving seniors are also receiving training on how to recognize the signs of abuse and what to do when they think abuse may be occurring.

Today in many communities across Ontario, communities represented by members of this Legislature, people will mark this important day with candlelight vigils and other awareness-raising activities. The candlelight vigils are being held to symbolize shedding light on this hidden crime. I know all members in this Legislature believe that elder abuse has no place in Ontario. By informing people about elder abuse, Ontarians can help stop it.

I would like to recognize the work of the member for Willowdale, Mr. Zimmer, who in April of last year sought and received all-party support in the Legislature for his private member's resolution creating an annual Elder Abuse Awareness Day. That of course is one of the occasions on which all members of this Legislature came together, regardless of party affiliation, to agree with a good idea, because we all have that idea in our minds and in our hearts.

Public education is one of the best tools to focus the attention of all Ontarians on the issue of elder abuse. I ask members of this House to join with us as we recognize this important day.

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I'm very pleased to stand in the House on behalf of my leader, John Tory, and the PC caucus to acknowledge the importance of awareness in combating elder abuse in all of its ugly and sordid forms. But I also stand here, as I have on many occasions, as members are aware, to indicate that every day should be Elder Abuse Awareness Day and that we should be vigilant.

I'm sure by now that even the newest members of this legislative chamber have had occasions with constituents coming to their office with absolutely horrific stories. These should serve to educate us, to sensitize us and to cause us to seek out the kinds of reforms, initiatives and programs that will make Ontario a very safe place.

I'm very proud of the record of our government when we recognized the importance of this issue with a myriad of programs. In fact, it was at the very first International Congress on Elder Abuse, held in Spain in 2001, that Ontario was featured pre-eminently as the feature presentation to demonstrate the first government in North America to bring forward an elder abuse strategy.

I want to pay public tribute to Dr. Elizabeth Podnieks, who has received the Order of Canada for her leading research work and her deep compassion for seniors who are victims of elder abuse not only in this province but also in Canada. I was pleased, as the minister of the day, to work with her to develop the program and to commit \$4.3 million over five years.

I invite the new minister to make a commitment, because in several of the programs I'm going to enunciate we cannot see the ongoing commitment. This is a challenge for the new minister. I hope he will honour the amount of work that has gone on by seniors across this province to develop the kind of protective infrastructure they richly deserve, that they fought hard for years to get and that they now have in place.

There are some questions. We do want this elder abuse program that was begun by our government, which is in its last year of funding, to get the signal that it will be funded next year.

I want to say that a simple day in Ontario isn't as significant as the fact that the United Nations and the World Health Organization have dedicated June 15, 2006, as the beginning of World Elder Abuse Day. I invite the minister, and I will work with him, to elevate this and for Ontario to take its time-honoured leadership position in communicating to the world that we can show many provinces and states in the US the work that's been done here.

I also want to indicate to the minister that one of the various forums for the most vulnerable seniors is in our Alzheimer strategy. Again, we were very pleased, as a government, to deliver \$68.4 million over five years. Minister, that program has in effect been suspended since late last year. Of the 10-point plan that I developed, only three areas involved ongoing commitments. I knew that future governments would see this as a cost-saving area, so we're not making the kinds of financial commitments in this year, the sixth year after the start of the Alzheimer strategy, the first of its kind in Canada and the first of its kind anywhere in North America. Again, I invite the minister to become more engaged.

Hang Up On Fraud and Phonebusters: My colleague David Tsubouchi and I worked on that, again working with the United States and with the OPP, because seniors' phone fraud in Ontario is among some of the worst statistics anywhere in North America.

We know that the Ontario Residential Care Association has had an outstanding program for which, again, the government hasn't seen fit to provide funding to extend from the previous government and deal with their complaint registry line.

The seniors' safe medication program: I want to thank the Minister of Health. I went to the former minister for seniors, who said, "Cam, there's no money. We're going to have to collapse the program." I went to the Minister of Health and he found the money. This is a health promotion initiative. Ontario seniors are the most over-medicated group in the province, but only this year's funding has been extended.

Minister, I'm very pleased that we're highlighting this, but I encourage you: It's difficult, given that your budget has been slashed by \$800,000, but I invite you to become more directly involved in protecting seniors in Ontario.

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** In the press release today from the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, the minister is quoted as saying, "In order to shed light on this 'hidden crime'—elder abuse—"we are asking communities to conduct candlelight vigils and other awareness-raising activities to remember victims of elder abuse, and to encourage those who may know a victim of elder abuse to report the crime," Bradley said."

That is just not good enough. On this, day of all days, this government should have moved past the vigils and told the House what it's doing to reduce, indeed to eliminate, elder abuse in Ontario.

Let me give you two examples of what the government could have done. This is the recommendation from the coroner's jury from the Casa Verde inquest. It was released in April 2005, after 10 weeks of deliberations by a coroner's jury into the deaths of two residents, aged 71 and 78, at the hands of another resident, aged 74, at the Casa Verde nursing home in 2001. The jury heard extensive testimony around the circumstances of these individuals, and they heard about the other 11 residents of long-term-care facilities between 1994 and 2004 who died at the hands of other residents. Indeed, after this was released, there was another 85-year-old resident who died at the hands of her roommate in a long-term-care home in Kitchener in July of this year.

**1430**

This jury made 85 recommendations, many of them calling on the Ministry of Health to respond. For example, "The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care ... should give increased priority to the health care needs of the elderly and, in particular, the serious challenges faced in treating elderly cognitively impaired residents, by immediately developing and implementing a plan ... to ensure appropriate standards, funding, tracking and accountability in long-term-care ... and other facilities treating such individuals."

They went on to say as well: "The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care should fund specialized facilities to care for demented or cognitively impaired residents exhibiting aggressive behaviour as an alternative to long-term-care facilities. Funding for these facilities should be



based on a formula that accounts for the complex, high-care needs of these residents in order that the facility be staffed by regulated health care professionals ... who are trained ... and in sufficient numbers to care for these complex and behaviourally difficult residents."

They went on. It's recommended that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, if it makes a decision to continue to place individuals in long-term-care facilities, "must set standards for these facilities and units to ensure that they are sufficiently staffed with appropriately skilled regulated health care professionals who have expertise in managing" these difficulties—and the list goes on and on.

This government hasn't made a formal response to the Casa Verde recommendations. I asked the Minister of Health about that in the estimates two weeks ago, and the minister said the recommendations will be reflected in long-term-care legislation—legislation that we thought we were going to see last fall and that I hope we see this fall. But the government could have used this opportunity today, of all days, to even stand up and say whether or not they agree with the recommendations and when we might expect some form of concrete response.

If the government wanted to do a second thing, they could have passed Bill 47, An Act to protect persons in care from abuse. We all know, because it's been very public, that there has been story after story in the media about residents in long-term-care facilities who are suffering from neglect or abuse. As a result of reading those stories, my leader, Howard Hampton, introduced this bill in April 2004. The bill would have placed an obligation on owners of long-term-care homes to report incidents of abuse. It would have placed an onus on staff in long-term-care facilities to report such abuse, just like teachers, just like child care workers have an onus and obligation to report child abuse to the CAS.

Time after time, in response to statements made by the Minister of Health with respect to long-term care, I urged him and this government to pass this bill so that we would have some protection in place for residents in long-term-care homes, and the government refused to do that. The government refused to capitalize on an opportunity that was presented to them in April 2004.

I say today that of course elder abuse cannot be tolerated in the province of Ontario, but my goodness, this government should have used today as an opportunity to say very clearly, very publicly what they are doing or what they intend to do to deal with this very serious issue in Ontario, and they did not.

#### VISITOR

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: All members will know and agree with me on the importance of their staff to the work they do. I would like to especially welcome this afternoon to the Legislature my constituency assistant Neave Greig and her husband, Ted Greig.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### HEALTH PREMIUMS

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Minister of Finance. It seems the chickens are coming home to roost, potentially to the tune of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars, in terms of who has to pay the McGuinty health tax. Following yesterday's divisional court decision, isn't it time as you took action, as the Premier said you would, to determine and clarify exactly who is supposed to pay the McGuinty health tax?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of Cabinet):** You are no doubt aware that yesterday the Divisional Court released a ruling on the Lapointe-Fisher Nursing Home case. The ruling found that the employer was required to pay the Ontario health premium on behalf of its employees covered by the collective agreement, and the employer is currently deciding whether to appeal the ruling. We will continue to observe that, as we've looked at a number of arbitrators' decisions in the situation.

I do want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that our position has always been crystal clear that the Ontario health premium is a tax and not the OHIP premium that had previously been imposed under the Health Insurance Act. Unlike those old premiums, paying the new premium is not linked to the health coverage Ontario residents are entitled to receive.

I again remind the Leader of the Opposition that all revenue raised through the premium goes to transform Ontario's health care system and is being dedicated to our health care system in a way that will benefit all the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Tory:** It's only unfortunate that the court doesn't see the perfectly clear position you've been taking consistently on this and doesn't, obviously, recognize it.

We are asking you, Minister, to stand by what the Premier said in the House a year ago; namely, that steps would be taken to ensure that it is clear that taxpayers in Ontario have to pay your health tax.

At the root of this issue is fairness. Of all the cases brought before the arbitrator since you introduced the up to \$900 a year health tax on the hard-working people of Ontario, it is the public service employers, paid for through our taxes, that are having to pay the McGuinty health tax for their employees. So you have the irony, for example, of elderly, infirm people in various places where they are having to pay the health tax, and the staff people who care for them are not.

So my question is this: Do you think it is fair for taxpayers to have to pay your health tax twice, both for themselves and for the employees in these various parts of the public sector that these rulings affect?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** I would say to the Leader of the Opposition that no one is paying the health tax twice. In terms of this notion about clarity, in fact, the arbitrators' rulings out there are now 16 to 6. This is the first

Divisional Court ruling. The employer under consideration is considering an appeal, as I understand it, but at this point it seems clear.

What shouldn't be lost, and I hope the opposition leader will agree, is that the investments we're making in health care were absolutely essential. They were essential in the context of his government, which closed hospitals, laid off nurses, which did not do anything to enhance health care in this province and still fails to come to terms, in our view, with the fact that we have these investments and they're important to health care in Ontario.

The rulings to date are 16 to 6—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tory:** It always depends, I guess, on what score you look at. I think, when it comes to Divisional Court rulings, the score is 1 to 0 against the government. That's why there is a need for clarity here.

Minister, London Hydro, Ontario Power Generation, the Toronto Transit Commission and the city of Hamilton on behalf of their firefighters now have to pay your McGuinty health tax for their employees or, more correctly, the taxpayers of Ontario are not only paying their own health tax but they're paying for these employees as well. Now a nursing home in Guelph has lost its appeal and is required to pay your McGuinty health tax for its employees.

These arbitrations will have a ripple effect across the public service, and future labour negotiations will undoubtedly have more of the same. It's bad enough that taxpayers have to pay your McGuinty health tax at all, given your promise not to raise taxes. You've raised them \$2,000 apiece. Will we have to pay again? Will you move to clarify this situation, or will you stand by making taxpayers pay twice?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** No taxpayers pay twice, first of all. I'd remind the Leader of the Opposition—and I've reviewed the other decisions as well—that much of it has to do with the wording in collective agreements. We have no intention of stripping collective agreements, if that's what you're suggesting.

I think the Leader of the Opposition ought to come clean, when he talks about this tax, about what he is going to do to replace the \$2.9 billion that he proposes to take out of health care.

I would remind the Leader of the Opposition about some of the new investments that have been made in health care: over \$1 billion for our hospitals, \$620 million for support services for OHIP, \$388 million for 4,514 new long-term-care beds, \$230 million for Ontario drug programs, \$668 million for home care. To the Leader of the Opposition, we invested in those services. We did so because it was prudent, responsible public policy. What are you—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

**Mr. Tory:** I'll tell you what I'll start by doing: I'll start by growing the economy. We'll have to start doing that after we get rid of you out of that job, because you certainly won't, that's for sure.

1440

## GREENBELT FOUNDATION

**Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Tourism. Liberal MPPs on the government agencies committee indicated earlier today that they will vote to shut down our efforts to bring transparency and accountability to your secretive Greenbelt Foundation. What exactly are you hiding?

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I guess I could ask the leader of the official opposition what he's hiding. I can remember, many years ago when he was an adviser to Premier Davis, when they were setting up, for instance, the Niagara Escarpment Commission, that he would have been a strong supporter of initiatives of that kind. What appears to have happened to the Leader of the Opposition at this time is that the right wing of the Conservative Party appears to have taken over: just swipe everything else aside. It's very clear at this time that if you got your hands on the levers of power, what you would be doing is paving all of this environmentally sensitive land. A man who used to go to the Pollution Probe dinners—I admired him in those days when he took that strong environmental stance—is now taken over by the right wing of the party and wants to be on the side of land speculators. I can't believe this. I thought you'd be very supportive.

**Mr. Tory:** This is pretty sad stuff.

Again to the minister: Earlier today, your Liberal MPPs on the government agencies committee indicated that they'll be voting against any proposal to shed some light on your Liberal appointees to the \$25-million Greenbelt Foundation. Serious questions remain about just how independent your Greenbelt Foundation is, now that they've begun airing promotional ads for your government's policies. We revealed yesterday that your deputy minister has been appointed by the Premier himself to that board and sits on the supposedly independent board. We know that an adviser to a former Premier and one of Mr. McGuinty's transition team members also sits on the board. It's looking more independent by the minute.

Minister, why are you so intent on shutting down our attempts to shine some light on this foundation that has been given \$25 million of taxpayers' money, which it is apparently spending on advertising that promotes government policy? Why won't you yourself shed some light on that?

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** First of all, as your House leader sitting beside you would tell you and as former Speakers and the present Speaker would tell you, committees determine their own business. We in this House do not second-guess the business of committees. Every Speaker, when there has ever been a ruling asked of the Speaker, says that the committees determine their own business.

What I'm hearing when I hear you ask that question—I look over and see, if I can use the familiar term, my friend John Tory asking the question, but I'm really



hearing the voice of Mike Harris. What you want to do is paint the greenbelt land-speculator blue. I remind the leader of the official opposition that this government followed exactly what your government did in terms of establishing the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. We used exactly your model, and now you're complaining about that. I don't know why you're complaining, except that you're opposed to the greenbelt.

**Mr. Tory:** It's very clear: The minister has no interest in accountability for \$25 million of hard-earned taxpayers' money. We tried calling the Greenbelt Foundation: no answer on the phone and no voicemail. We went to their expensive offices up in swanky Yorkville, a really appropriate address for a foundation like this, and there was nobody there, just boxes in an empty office. Yet somehow, with no office, no phone, no voicemail, they have found the means to launch a multi-million dollar advertising campaign promoting the policies of your government. Twenty-five million taxpayer dollars have been funnelled into your foundation but we don't know why.

I ask the minister, where is the business plan for this foundation? Will you bring it here today, and if not, tomorrow? Where are the directives as to how the \$25 million is to be spent? Is it all for backdoor advertising? How are they spending the taxpayers' money? What assurance do you have that they're doing it properly? Do you have answers—and will you give them—to these legitimate questions about \$25 million of the taxpayers' money or—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked. Minister.

**Hon. Mr. Bradley:** My friend from Oak Ridges asked what voices I'm hearing now. It's the voice of Mike Harris I keep hearing. I look at John Tory as the leader of the official opposition and I hear the same old rhetoric I heard from the Mike Harris government. Unfortunately, the right wing has taken over there. They don't want the Greenbelt Foundation to be able to provide anything to the people of Ontario.

I want to tell him that there's nothing innovative about this. In fact, I guess I have to pay some credit to your government. We simply followed exactly what you did with the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation in establishing it. You provided, I think, some \$15 million as seed money in that particular case for a smaller area of land than the greenbelt is involved with. I remember applauding that at the time. I was never critical; I applauded it. I didn't think there was any sinister plot. But do you know something? That was because we in this party agreed with the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. The secret agenda the Leader of the Opposition—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

#### ACADEMIC TESTING

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** To the Minister of Education: You say that higher student test scores prove that the McGuinty government plan is working. Tell me, do you believe that Ontario students

are smarter now than they were two years ago, or did you make the EQAO tests a lot easier?

**Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education):** We are a little saddened to see the leader of the third party grasping at proverbial straws here. There is a turnaround taking place in education, and we expect the support of the third party for it. We expect the third party to want to see students read, write and do mathematics better. They established the EQAO, and Mr. Hampton and his group have spent all their time running away from the fact that we need to have advancement in our publicly funded education system.

We believe that the teachers of this province are discredited by the questions the gentleman opposite is asking, because they have worked hard, and so have students, their parents and so on. They have become better at doing mathematics, they've become better at reading, they've become better at writing, and they will continue to improve because they are now getting significant support. The hard work of teachers, principals and schools is responsible for the results. We are working with them for the first time in a coordinated fashion, and I would expect support from the third party for that effort and for those—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

**Mr. Hampton:** I asked the minister if he'd made the EQAO tests easier; I didn't get an answer. Maybe the minister needs unlimited time and a calculator to answer the question.

Minister, you promised to improve student results dramatically. Instead, you have made the student tests dramatically easier. You made the tests shorter, you gave students twice as long to complete the tests and you even let grade 3 students use calculators. Tell me, Minister, how can you compare this year's results to previous years' results when you manipulated the test and put politics ahead of pedagogy?

1450

**Hon. Mr. Kennedy:** The only politics on display here are the desperate actions of the leader of the third party, because he wouldn't be mildly interested that an international panel reviewed the operations of the EQAO. They were supervised by a board appointed by the previous government, every single one of them, including a former Conservative Minister of Education. Further, they decided that it would be perfectly comparable to have the test administered in a shorter fashion with less taxing of resources in schools, and be comparable, be every bit as difficult. Therefore, that international panel, the EQAO, which still has Bette Stephenson, the former Conservative Minister of Education, on the board, believes that this is a completely independent test compared to the years before.

The third party opposite, if they have information, if they've actually done their homework and talked to the EQAO, talked to the independent experts, talked to OISE, talked to the people from other provinces who supervised this process, then they can speak in this House. Otherwise—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** Well, I spoke to some of the teachers who mark the tests, and this is what they tell us. They tell us that the test is now a lot easier. They say that the new tests are designed to pass more students to suit your political purposes. And those teachers would join us here today, but they can't, because you made them sign a gag order. If they speak out, you can fire them or fine them.

Minister, if the EQAO tests are a fair and transparent tool for assessing student achievement, why won't the McGuinty government let front-line teachers tell the truth about your tests?

**Hon. Mr. Kennedy:** It's tempting to admit that there is a conspiracy to improve student achievement in this province and that there's a vastly orchestrated effort to try and see if we can't get those darn kids to learn better. In fact, the results we have this year are comparable to the results we were able to achieve last year—about a four point improvement. It's slightly more this year.

Last year, there was no change in the test; there was just a change in the attitude in our schools. There was peace and stability in the offing for the first time. There was a government that respected education for the first time. And if the leader of the third party is still having trouble with the operation of the EQAO, which is just one small part of our improvement agenda, then he should talk to Dave Cooke, because it was his government that brought in the EQAO and all the procedures that he's complaining about.

We say to him and to the opposition: We expect your support. This is an effort that is too important to the future of this province. We expect you to get behind it and we expect you to give constructive criticism in this House, not imaginary—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## HEALTH PREMIUMS

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** To the Minister of Finance—but I would just tell the minister that I've talked to the teachers, and they're prepared to talk to the press.

Minister of Finance, at the urging—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** We'll stop the clock. We can wait.

Leader of the third party.

**Mr. Hampton:** Minister of Finance, at the urging of the United Food and Commercial Workers, the Divisional Court has just ruled that under a collective agreement at a Guelph nursing home, the employer, not the employees, must bear the cost of your despised health tax. Thousands of Ontario employees have similar wording in their collective agreements and deserve equal treatment.

Your government says that you've been monitoring this case and you've been anticipating some of these rulings. My question is, how much does the McGuinty government anticipate will have to be paid to employees in accordance with this ruling and other collective agreements?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of Cabinet):** We've also looked at the rulings involving Jazz Air, Goodyear, Walker Exhaust, Smurfit-MBI, H.J. Heinz, Woodbine Entertainment, Uniboard New Liskeard, Placer Dome, Selkirk Canada, Waterloo municipality, Conair, colleges' support, participating hospitals, the Ontario Nurses' Association, Thermal Ceramics and Toronto Hydro. These are examples where the arbitrator has found a different ruling. There are now 16 arbitrator rulings on the other side, and one that you've referenced. There's one Divisional Court ruling, a ruling that we understand will be appealed.

The bottom line is that, as this government has said from the beginning, this is a tax. It is a tax that is designed to allow us to make the improvements in health care that we believe are necessary to ensure that the people of Ontario have access to the kinds of services that they have been deprived of for too long. This ruling is yet another ruling on a complex issue, and we will continue to monitor it. I've read the decision myself and we believe—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr. Hampton:** I was in this Legislature when the McGuinty government presented its budget, and it said over and over again, "This is a health care premium. This is a health care premium. This is a health care premium."

The reality is that there are a number of public service collective agreements—power worker collective agreements, hospital collective agreements, education worker collective agreements and municipal worker collective agreements—that are very similar to the UFCW collective agreement that was considered in this case. This means that there are literally tens of thousands of hard-working, dedicated public servants who have made a reasonable argument, based upon their collective agreement, that you, the employer, the government, are responsible for paying your health premium.

Your bungling is putting a lot of public sector partners—hospitals, schools, colleges—in a very difficult position. Can you guarantee us today that you won't leave these hospitals, schools and colleges out on a limb with no money to pay for your bungling?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** I did read off a list of collective agreements where opposite findings have been made by arbitrators, and I would say this to the member: Unlike him, the one thing we won't do is go back and open collective agreements and strip them. That's something they did. The wording of collective agreements is a question here that has had different interpretations by different arbitrators, depending on the wording in the collective agreement. The impact of these decisions at this point in time is overwhelmingly in favour of the employer. We will not, as I said earlier, go in and strip collective agreements. We continue to monitor this situation and we will continue to invest in the important health care services that were neglected for far too long in Ontario.

**Mr. Hampton:** I don't think hospitals, school boards and community colleges will feel any satisfaction from that non-answer. The truth is you could have avoided this



mess. You could have been open and transparent in the beginning in your budget. Instead of trying to call this a health premium over and over again, you could have said up front that it's an unfair, regressive tax. But you didn't, and the reason you didn't was for partisan, political purposes—something about Dalton McGuinty staring into the camera and saying, "I will not raise your taxes," and then doing just that: raising taxes by \$2.5 billion.

Minister, I'm going to ask you the question again today: Can you guarantee that school boards, hospitals and municipalities will be able to meet this looming health tax obligation without cutting staff or cutting services?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** I again remind the member that the majority of arbitrations, including those arbitrations that involve the public sector or the broader public sector, were found in favour of the employer at this point in time. But I can tell you what this government won't do: This government won't cut \$268 million from hospitals the way the member opposite's government did. This government will not cut OHIP funding by \$315 million. This government would not do what they did to the Ontario drug benefit, which they cut by \$29.3 million. We will not do to mental health what that member's government did, and that was to cut it by \$23.3 million in 1992-93. And they hadn't had enough: Then they cut it by \$42 million in 1994-95.

This government is committed to improving the health care system in the province and ensuring that the people of Ontario have access to a full range of health—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

1500

## PAROLE SYSTEM

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** My question today is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Yesterday the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police sent a strong message to those of us here at Queen's Park. As a community safety issue, they do not want the government of Ontario to upload our parole board to the people who send convicts to Wonderland. Minister, will you now agree that it's time to listen to our community safety leaders? Will you stand in the House today and assure Ontarians that our parole system will not be turned over to the soft-on-crime Martin Liberals?

**Hon. Monte Kwinter (Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services):** I thank the member for the question. Just to put it in context—I keep delivering this message to the people in the opposition, but they don't seem to understand it; the former minister doesn't understand it—at the present time there are 56,000 male offenders who are in the community under supervision. We have, in that group, 130 people who are on parole. That represents a quarter of 1% of the total number of people who are under community supervision. We have 130 people, and we are looking at seeing whether or not this is the most effective way of doing it: Do you have a whole establishment, the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board, looking at it, or should we

transfer it to the federal parole system? We haven't made that decision, but certainly, if you take a look at the numbers, and we're only dealing with a quarter of 1%, it is our responsibility—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you, Minister. Supplementary.

**Mr. Dunlop:** I have looked at the numbers. I have learned that the allocated funds to operate the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board is \$2.2 million for this year. In a document dated April of this year, Correctional Services Canada indicated the projected cost of the added responsibilities of case preparation and offender supervision has been estimated to be \$10 million annually and another \$1.6 million for the National Parole Board. The cost will be a staggering \$11.6 million, or \$9 million-plus more than the cost to operate our provincial parole system now.

Minister, there is only one taxpayer. Even if you don't consider community safety to be a priority, will you at least consider the taxpayer and let this foolish idea die once and for all?

**Hon. Mr. Kwinter:** I actually welcome that inclusion into the equation, because it's something we're aware of. I'm glad you've gone off the tack of saying that we're releasing murderers into the community and doing all of these things if we do this.

We are looking at doing exactly what we hope we can do, which is to determine whether or not it's more cost-effective to do it the other way, whether it's more effective. In all of our deliberations, the overriding factor is community safety. So when we examine all the issues, which is something we are doing, we will make a determination and we will do it in the best interests of the people of Ontario.

## PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Each day more and more Ontarians seem to be getting angry at you because of the property tax system. It's not uncommon in my own riding of Beaches–East York and in some of the downtown ridings to see 20%, 30% or 40% increases in the alleged value of the homes. Given that there's a 12% average increase in Toronto, that means up to a whopping 28% tax increase that these people in downtown areas are facing.

In opposition, you repeatedly said this was a bad law by the previous government. In opposition, you said it would be unfair to taxpayers. Now you are choosing to accept the Mike Harris law and do nothing. My question is simple: Do you have any plan at all to help these taxpayers?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan (Minister of Finance, Chair of Cabinet):** I would suggest to the member opposite that in the MPAC situation, the way he characterized the evaluations that have come out is wrong. If he's advocating that people in Scarborough and Etobicoke should get tax increases and someone else shouldn't, that's for him to do.

Are there problems in the system? There may well be. We welcome the inquiry by the Ombudsman, as the Premier said yesterday, and look forward to his recommendations. I would suggest to the member opposite that if he doesn't like this system, if the NDP is against a current market value, they ought to say so, and if they're going to replace it, they ought to say how they're going to replace it. No system in this instance is perfect.

Assessments have been going out over the last few days in various municipalities. We are going to watch what happens. I would remind the member opposite that increases in assessments don't necessarily lead to increases in taxes and—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

**Mr. Prue:** The ratepayers in this province don't want to wait six or eight months for Mr. Marin; they want you to do something now.

I have a few suggestions for you—real easy things you can do. You can fix the process that assesses like houses on the same street with the same conditions, to make them pay the same amount. You can change the process and the appeal process to be open and transparent, to ensure disclosure, something which is not done now. You can upload the provincially mandated services that you condemned Mike Harris for doing, and you can do that now. You can take action to start reducing the education portion that you take, and you can do that now. If you have no ideas, here are some for you. Take some of these.

Do you have a plan? Is there anything you can say today?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** It's interesting that less than a week ago the same member said their party had no plan. What he said was, "Our party's plan is in gestation. We'll definitely have a position on property taxes by the 2007 election." Do you know what else he said? He said the NDP doesn't want to share its ideas too early. Well, God bless you.

Let me give you an idea. Before you start making suggestions that are going to raise some people's taxes, you ought to think it through carefully. The previous government went through seven reincarnations of property tax changes—seven bills in short order. We are going to be responsible and prudent. We look forward to M. Marin's review of MPAC. We will take advice into account, and we certainly look forward to—

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. New question.

## FOREST INDUSTRY

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** My question today is for the Minister of Natural Resources. As you know, Tembec is an important—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** If the member would just give us a minute, we really do have to get ourselves under control. A little bit of quiet so I can hear the member from Nipissing would be most helpful.

**Ms. Smith:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. As you know, Tembec is an important employer in my region and an important player in the Ontario forestry industry. The rising value of the Canadian dollar, the Canada-US softwood lumber dispute, increasing electricity costs and fuel costs and offshore competition have, as you have stated, created a perfect storm for Ontario's forestry industry.

Minister, you and I are both from northern Ontario and we know you've worked very hard to ensure that the forestry sector is a strong and viable industry. Can you tell us today what our government is doing to ensure that Ontario's forest industry remains competitive?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I'm very proud of the McGuinty government's response to the problems and challenges that are happening in the forest sector. We announced actually the largest sectoral package ever of this government, \$680 million, the other day. As you know, this is a combination of \$500 million of grant and loan guarantees to the companies to incent them to make the investments to make them more productive. We've also started to contribute to some of the downloading that the previous governments had done on the industry, contributing \$28 million now, year over year, to the cost of road construction, and also uploading back the cost of the forest inventory work.

1510

**Ms. Smith:** I've heard from many people in my riding, including many representatives from Tembec and various forest industry representatives, that the industry needs more help. Specifically, they need help from the federal government. Minister, how can we assist our forestry industry here in Ontario in their quest for federal support?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** I appreciate the question, because quite frankly we're looking to the federal government now to make a contribution nationally to this industry. It's a very important industry to northern Canada, and northern Ontario is an important player in that. We got wind the other day of a \$50-million program from the federal government to the Quebec industry. Certainly we're going to keep Mr. Martin's feet to the fire. He said in Kenora in June that he would contribute to the industry in Ontario, so we're looking to the feds to do that. The other thing I'd ask the feds to do is to make sure they come forward with a loan guarantee for the sawmills in this country, which have duty deposits in the United States of over \$5 billion. That's really hurting our industry. If they want to, obviously, prolong the softwood lumber dispute, then they should be not borrowing but they should be renting it and putting the money up front.

## HYDRO GENERATION

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Your policy to shut down all coal power plants by 2009 made no sense two years ago and it makes no sense today. The former minister had tunnel vision on this subject, to the point



where it clouded his judgment such that he referred to opponents of his policy as neanderthals. Are you going to continue to take your marching orders from him and board that runaway train, or will you show some enlightened forward thinking, open-mindedness, with regard to clean coal technology here in the province of Ontario? Will you shut down this irresponsible policy?

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** Thanks to the honourable member for the question. Our commitment is firm: We are shutting down coal-fired plants. I'd also like to refer to the issue of clean coal technology. It is true that you can put scrubbers in for reducing SO<sub>x</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>, but you cannot reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> and mercury emissions. There is no such thing as clean coal technology. Let me repeat: There is no such thing as clean coal technology. You can make it cleaner, but you cannot have clean coal technology.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I would suggest that some scrubbers need to be installed, but perhaps on the energy minister, because what she's spewing out is not good for us here in this House. Business leaders, manufacturers, industries and energy providers in this province have said—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Stop the clock. We can wait. Member?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Industry leaders, energy providers etc. have told me that this government's coal policy will plunge this province into darkness and our economy into a severe downward spiral, perhaps a recession. It is not too late, Minister, to start thinking for yourself, thinking on behalf of Ontarians and not this ridiculous Liberal Party policy. Rethink your decision to shut down 25% of our generation capacity before 2009. Think about it, and rethink it today, Minister.

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** Actually I'm pleased to be able to stand up and tell you that with the 394 megawatts of new renewable supply, we have brought \$700 million into this province, and for the first time in Fort Erie we have a wind turbine manufacturer that will bring over 100 new jobs to that district.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Minister of Energy. This week you failed to disclose key information about your \$6.5-billion sweetheart deal for private nuclear power. Now we've learned another secret. Under your deal, hydro consumers will have to pay for skyrocketing uranium price increases. That's a very expensive subsidy. In the last three years alone, the spot price of uranium has increased by over 300%. Minister, you're already forcing hydro consumers to subsidize cost overruns. You're forcing them to subsidize reduced lease payments in your private nuclear power deal. Why are you forcing hydro consumers to also subsidize any increases in the price of uranium?

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I thank the member for the question. So he must be ab-

solutely delighted that we got 6.34 cents on the long-term contract guarantee for Bruce Power.

**Mr. Hampton:** I think the minister needs to be briefed some more. I think that part is obvious. While you're getting briefed, maybe you could also ask about another aspect of your \$6.5-billion deal with Bruce nuclear, because if there's a serious nuclear accident at Bruce Power, the company's liability is limited to only \$75 million. So let's see: a \$6.5-billion giveaway to Bruce nuclear, but if there's a serious nuclear accident, they're limited to \$75 million of liability and hydro ratepayers in Ontario have to pick up the rest. Can you tell us, Minister, the more you look at it, does this deal make any sense for hydro ratepayers, or are you only concerned with how good it is for Bruce Power?

**Hon. Mrs. Cansfield:** We have repeatedly stated that we have to replace 25,000 megawatts by 2020 and we are going to do it in three ways: We are going to build new generation, we are going to maximize our existing assets and we are going to build a culture of conservation in this province. It's going to take every one of us—maybe some are not engaged in that process—to make it happen. There is no question that we are going to move forward. As I said yesterday, we have put 2,200 on-line when we came in, 9,000 underway, another 1,500—I was pleased to suggest last night that maybe there's even more potential for the wind industry, having heard from over 1,000 delegates at a conference that they want to do business in Ontario.

### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** My question is for the Attorney General, the Honourable Michael Bryant. One of the unfortunate and regrettable duties I had this past summer as the representative of Etobicoke North was attending the funerals of young men whose lives were cut short, who were gunned down in their prime. This issue is now coming too close to home.

With respect, Minister, I ask that this House recognize Mr. Mohammed Gilao, who joins us in the visitors' gallery. Mr. Gilao is the father of a precious son, Loyan, age 23, who was one of the victims and in whose name and loving memory he has created the Loyan Charitable Foundation.

Minister, would you please inform this House, and particularly my own district of Etobicoke North, what steps are we as a government taking, what measures are we bringing to bear on this emerging problem on the streets of Toronto?

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** Thank you, Mr. Gilao, for your courage in coming here today and for your inspiration. For you and your family, friends and neighbours, and for those who are here today in support of the foundation, your hope and prayer, I know from my colleague and your MPP, is that something good somehow will come of this tragic event. There is no one panacea for prevent gun crime. We do know that the provincial government has a critical role to play. We

must address the supply of guns, the demand for guns. We must do all we can to prevent violence by having appropriate police resources and prosecution in place, and we must do all we can to prevent those who are at risk from entering into a life of crime.

I look forward to continuing in the supplementary.

1520

**Mr. Qaadri:** One of the areas of wide concern for my constituents is: that people who have been convicted of gun-related crimes be appropriately sentenced, that they receive just punishment. Minister, would you be able to inform this House what you are doing specifically to address this issue of appropriate sentencing and what directives you have issued to crown prosecutors when they pursue justice in gun-related crimes?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** The clear direction to crown prosecutors is that we must vigorously enforce and in no cases give way when it comes to gun crimes. That's on the prosecution side. We have established in Ontario for the first time 12 new gun crowns who are specialized in gun violence. We have a guns and gangs task force that works together with the police. But we also need changes at the federal level. I have spoken to every provincial attorney general over the past few weeks and over the past two years, but in particular leading up to a federal-provincial-territorial justice ministers conference in November. We must send a message to Parliament that the time has come for mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes, so that there be meaningful punishment for these acts.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Your decision and Premier McGuinty's decision not to fund the expansion of the Cambridge Memorial Hospital will adversely affect health care for the families in Waterloo region. That expansion is an integral part of our regional health care system, most important to this fast-growing community that already suffers from a lack of physicians. The hospital expansion was mandated by the Health Services Restructuring Commission and approved by the Ontario government. The councils of Waterloo region and the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo have joined Cambridge council and regional citizens in requesting that this project proceed forthwith. Furthermore, the council and the citizens of Waterloo region have contributed the \$23-million local share of this \$80-million project. Would you please tell the people of Waterloo region on what criteria or plan your decision was made?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** To the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

**Hon. David Caplan (Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, Deputy Government House Leader):** I want to thank the member for the question. I know the member and the community are disappointed that we have had to make some choices. He specifically asked what criteria were used, and I'd like to answer very specifically and directly.

On health care policy questions, it was transformation and growth renewal. Of course, we did apply another criterion, which was that we wanted to achieve a reasonable amount of equity around the province to meet the various health care needs of communities from one end of this province to the other. The other two criteria that were used specifically were the cash flow and the monies we had available within a \$5-billion health care envelope, the largest of its kind in five years—in the province's history, I would add. The last criterion was a gauge of the relative construction capacity of the province. The member and all members of this assembly should know that at any one time, there are only five major construction firms to do this type of health care capital construction. We had to gauge their ability to take on over 105 health care—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Martiniuk:** Again to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care: For months I have requested from you an appointment so that I could be briefed on the hospital expansion progress, and you've refused to see me. Yet you recently met with Cambridge Liberal Janko Peric, and you promised him \$3 million for renovations to the hospital's leaky roof and boiler repairs. You won't meet with the elected official, yet you meet and discuss confidential business of the hospital with private individuals. I question the propriety in that regard. I understand that the same Mr. Peric may be meeting with your colleague Dwight Duncan. Tell me, are you playing politics with the health and lives of Waterloo region? For once, let's have the truth.

**The Speaker:** The last statement needs to be withdrawn, member from Cambridge.

**Mr. Martiniuk:** With all respect to yourself personally and your position, I refuse to withdraw that statement.

**The Speaker:** I'll give you one more opportunity.

**Mr. Martiniuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I refuse to withdraw that statement.

**The Speaker:** I name the member from Cambridge, Mr. Martiniuk.

*Mr. Martiniuk was escorted from the chamber.*

#### WATER QUALITY

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I have a question for the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment. Sound principles for protecting source waters are being breached every day, thanks to the MOE approval of the big pipe in York region. Enough water to fill a large swimming pool is being removed every minute between now and 2007. Streams and wells are drying up—120 wells to date. Even a small leak in a pipe carrying several hundred million litres of sewage and *E. coli* every day could be catastrophic to York region and Toronto. Will you keep your government's promise to protect source water and stop the big pipe today?



**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth–Middlesex):** I want to thank the member opposite for the question. York region's approved growth is straining its sewage system and perhaps putting lives at risk. As a result, in this process the ministry is constantly scrutinizing the region's construction activities. Last fall, the minister imposed 40 conditions on the construction. These conditions are legally binding. If the ministry notes a concern, it orders the region to address it. The ministry has already issued the region one order requiring it to address concerns related to Robinson Creek. More orders will be issued if other concerns are noted.

1530

**Ms. Churley:** I don't think you're listening to people who are telling you what a dangerous thing this is. The government's record on source water protection is down the drain before they even start. You're permitting a 1,500-acre development in north Leslie, despite the area being critical to source water protection. The big pipe and the north Leslie development slices right through your precious greenbelt and will enable massive sprawl to continue. At this rate, the stuffed bunny in your ads on the greenbelt will be the only animal able to survive your greenbelt. The citizens of Toronto and York region are quite rightly very concerned. You have not done a thorough assessment. Will you at least agree to stop all construction now underway and call a full environmental assessment?

**Mr. Wilkinson:** I appreciate the supplementary. I can share with the House that, moving forward, we expect the region's growth-related activities to be consistent, obviously, with Ontario's planning legislation and all environmental laws. To this end, the region must complete environmental assessments of both the southeast collector through the Rouge Valley and the upper Leslie Street trunk on the Oak Ridges moraine. The ministry is presently reviewing the region's terms of reference for the EA of the southeast collector.

We are pleased that the region has created a multi-stakeholder group to inform the development of a sustainable growth plan. The region should take the group's esteemed advice seriously.

I want you to know that the McGuinty government and the Ministry of the Environment are committed to the environment for the safety of our children and our grandchildren, and our commitment to source water protection is sacrosanct in this government.

#### ACADEMIC TESTING

**Mrs. Liz Sandals (Guelph–Wellington):** My question is to the Minister of Education. This morning, the Education Quality and Accountability Office, the EQAO, released the annual results of standardized testing that evaluates students in grades 3 and 6 in reading, writing and math, and grade 9 students in math. These test results have been ongoing for the past eight years, and they have been disputed. Indeed, the leader of the third party was disputing them today—inappropriately, I might add.

Some state that they don't really evaluate students' actual success and in fact are used by real estate agents to rank neighbourhoods based on schools. Certainly, all of us have had experience of inappropriate attempts at ranking schools based on these results and inappropriate bashing of teachers and the education system. You state, however, that we can use these test results for more than just bashing. Minister, why should we believe that the results submitted today will be used in a different manner—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Gerard Kennedy (Minister of Education):** It is a very germane question because, unfortunately, even though the NDP government did bring in the EQAO testing, it was the Conservative government that turned it into something different and made EQAO somewhat of a four-letter word within education circles, because they did the test and didn't follow up with the results of the test. They left students who needed assistance, who needed recognition, who needed support, hanging.

We are completing what needs to be done to make those tests relevant and justifiable. We have reduced the cost of the tests. We've saved about \$15 million. That's going directly into helping students to do better. We have used last year's results—and this year's and previous years', in fact—for the first time to target where the needs are, to know which boards, which schools and which types of students need to have actual responsiveness from the provincial government.

We've done that in a number of important ways. We've done it through turnaround schools, through additional funding for 120 different projects, and we've done it directly in terms of teacher training. It is a—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Supplementary.

**Mrs. Sandals:** The results show that our programs have in fact helped an average of 62% of students achieve the provincial standard this year. That's up from 58% last year and 54% in the last year of the previous government.

We have a strategy in education. We are currently investing a record number of dollars in education and we have developed the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat to aid us in improving students' success. However, I do have a concern based on these numbers. We have committed to achieving a standard of 75% of students reaching the provincial standard by 2008. Minister, are we going to be able to do that?

**Hon. Gerard Kennedy:** It's a question that I hope grips all members of this House, because our ability to make up for the years we lost when the system was not going forward under previous governments is now here and in front of us to deal with as a consequence. We need to drive forward student achievement in a lot of dimensions, but I think we can all agree that reading, writing and mathematics are included in the foundational ones.

The results we have this year—and I want to say for the record that information from the third party earlier was inaccurate. Calculators have always been in use in

EQAO scores. We're going to get there by having actual achievement. There was a four point achievement this year; there was a four point achievement in the year before, after zero, zero and zero—in fact, negative in some of the preceding three years. We're going to get there only if we can improve achievement. The only way we're going to improve that, frankly, is that we're going to have to get better and better at a coordinated effort, which I think deserves not just the support, as it has now, of teachers, school boards and other educational professionals, but of everyone in this assembly.

## PETITIONS

### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas, we the residents of Sarnia–Lambton and surrounding area:

"As patients, doctors and staff and residents, we are voicing concerns to the board and upper administration and our concerns are not being heard or dealt with.

"Our equipment is outdated and in turn inaccurate diagnoses are the result.

"We want continuity of care in our community.

"We want an investigation regarding the spending of dollars at Bluewater Health.

"We want all our doctors in the community to have a voice at the hospital, not just a few.

"We, the undersigned, humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario conduct an operational review of the health care system in the county of Lambton."

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie–Lincoln):** I'm pleased to present a petition from the good folks in the Wainfleet and Wellandport area that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas gasoline prices are at the highest level ever; and

"Whereas with higher prices, higher hydro rates, user fees and now skyrocketing gas prices, working families, seniors and youth cannot make ends meet; and

"Whereas before being elected Premier, Dalton McGuinty promised he had three 'solid ideas' to reduce gas prices, but as Premier has done nothing; and

"Whereas provincial tax on gas is 14 cents per litre and federal tax is 10 cents per litre plus 7% GST (a tax on a tax);

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Ontario government and the federal government should act to give consumers a break to compensate for skyrocketing gas prices."

I add my signature as well in support.

## GO TRANSIT TUNNEL

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** This petition is addressed to the Parliament of Ontario, the minister of infrastructure services and the Minister of Transportation. It reads as follows:

"Whereas GO Transit is presently planning to tunnel an area just south of St. Clair Avenue West and west of Old Weston Road, making it easier for GO trains to pass a major rail crossing;

"Whereas TTC is presently planning a TTC right-of-way along all of St. Clair Avenue West, including the bottleneck caused by the dilapidated St. Clair–Old Weston Road bridge;

"Whereas this bridge (underpass) will be: (1) too narrow for the planned TTC right-of-way, since it will leave only one lane for traffic; (2) it is not safe for pedestrians (it's about 50 metres long). It's dark and slopes on both east and west sides creating high banks for 300 metres; and (3) it creates a divide, a no man's land, between Old Weston Road and Keele Street. (This was acceptable when the area consisted entirely of slaughterhouses, but now the area has 900 new homes);

"Therefore we, the undersigned, demand that GO Transit extend the tunnel beyond St. Clair Avenue West so that trains will pass under St. Clair Avenue West, thus eliminating this eyesore of a bridge with its high banks and blank walls. Instead it will create a dynamic, revitalized community enhanced by a beautiful continuous cityscape with easy traffic flow."

I'll sign my name to it, since I agree with this petition 100%

1540

## REGIONAL CENTRES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty and his Liberal government were elected based on their promise to rebuild public services in Ontario;

"Whereas the Minister of Community and Social Services has announced plans to close Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental disabilities, many of whom have multiple diagnoses and severe problems that cannot be met in the community;

"Whereas closing Huronia Regional Centre will have a devastating impact on residents with developmental disabilities, their families, the developmental services sector and the economies of the local communities; and

"Whereas Ontario could use the professional staff and facilities of Huronia Regional Centre to extend specialized services, support and professional training to many more clients who live in the community, in partnership with families and community agencies;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government to keep Huronia Regional Centre, home to people with developmental



disabilities, open, and to transform them into 'centres of excellence' to provide specialized services and support to Ontarians with developmental needs, no matter where they live."

I agree with the petition, and I've signed it.

#### PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener-Waterloo):** "We, the undersigned, being long-term-care staff, family and friends of long-term-care residents, request that the Ontario government Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care immediately cease the current restriction of 100 physiotherapy visits per resident per year for residents living in long-term-care facilities.

"We support the opinion that to place an extremely limiting provision will be of severe detriment to the health and well-being of residents living in long-term care. We ask that the Ontario government Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care keep the original provision of 150 physiotherapy visits per resident per year for residents living in long-term care.

"We request the Ontario government to invest in the health of long-term-care residents, enhance their strength and quality of life by ceasing the current restrictions."

I hereby have signed my signature.

#### CHIROPRACTIC SERVICES

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** I have even more petitions for support of the chiropractic services in the Ontario health insurance plan that read as follows:

"Whereas elimination of OHIP coverage will mean that many of the 1.2 million patients who use chiropractic will no longer be able to access the health care they need;

"Those with reduced ability to pay—including seniors, low-income families and the working poor—will be forced to seek care in already overburdened family physician offices and emergency departments;

"Elimination of OHIP coverage is expected to save \$93 million in expenditures on chiropractic treatment, at a cost to government of over \$200 million in other health care costs; and

"There was no consultation with the public on the decision to delist chiropractic services;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse the decision announced in the May 18, 2004, provincial budget and maintain OHIP coverage for chiropractic services, in the best interests of the public, patients, the health care system, government and the province."

In support of these constituents, I affix my signature.

#### VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the fire departments in Simcoe-Grey are strengthened by the service of double-hatter firefighters

who work as professional, full-time firefighters and also serve as volunteer firefighters on their free time and in their home communities; and

"Whereas the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association has declared their intent to 'phase out' these double-hatter firefighters; and

"Whereas double-hatter firefighters are being threatened by the union leadership and forced to resign as volunteer firefighters or face losing their full-time jobs and this is weakening volunteer fire departments in Ontario; and

"Whereas Simcoe-Grey MPP Jim Wilson has supported Bill 52, the Volunteer Firefighters Employment Protection Act as introduced by Waterloo-Wellington MPP Ted Arnott, which would uphold the right to volunteer and solve this problem concerning public safety in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the provincial government express public support for Bill 52 and willingness to pass it into law or introduce similar legislation that protects the right of firefighters to volunteer in their home communities on their own free time."

Of course I agree, and I've signed this petition.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition that has been signed by residents of Ottawa and Orléans that reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas children with autism who have reached the age of six years are no longer being discharged from their preschool autism program; and

"Whereas these children should be getting the best special education possible in the form of applied behaviour analysis (ABA) within the school system; and

"Whereas there are approximately 700 preschool children with autism across Ontario who are required to wait indefinitely for placement in the program, and there are also countless school-age children that are not receiving the support they require in the school system; and

"Whereas this situation has an impact on the families, extended families and friends of all of these children; and

"Whereas, as stated on the Web site for the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 'IBI can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism. Its objective is to decrease the frequency of challenging behaviours, build social skills and promote language development';

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to fund the treatment of IBI for all pre-school children awaiting services. We also petition the Legislature of Ontario to fund an educational program in the form of ABA in the school system."

I agree with the petitioners. I've affixed my signature to this.

### PROPERTY TAXATION

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have with me a petition from the Garrison Creek residents in my riding. They have sent this petition to me to present to you. It's to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Finance. It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned property owners and tenants, strongly recommend changes in the current value assessment. The present assessment system is too high. There may be a tax revolt.

"We believe the municipal tax system should reflect the following principles: (1) Ability to pay should be a consideration; (2) property taxes should be related to services 100%; (3) homeowners should not be penalized for improving their properties; (4) dependence on the residential property tax to raise provincial and municipal revenues should be reduced; (5) the assessment system should be stable over a long period of time; (6) assessments should be objective, accurate, consistent, correct, equitable and easily understood—house S.F./class/price; lot S.F./class/price, garage S.F./class/price; and (7) the owner should be authorized to approve the assessment.

"Most of our funding has come from ratepayers' groups and citizens from across the city of Toronto."

Mr. Speaker, I will present this petition to you.

### HIGHWAY 26

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 was approved by MPP Jim Wilson and the previous PC government in 1999; and

"Whereas a number of horrific fatalities and accidents have occurred on the old stretch of Highway 26; and

"Whereas the redevelopment of Highway 26 is critical to economic development and job creation in Simcoe-Grey;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Liberal government stop the delay of Highway 26 ... and act immediately to ensure that the project is finished on schedule to improve safety for area residents and provide economic development opportunities and job creation in Simcoe-Grey."

Obviously, I agree with the petition and I've signed it.

### FREDERICK BANTING HOMESTEAD

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Sir Frederick Banting was the man who discovered insulin and was Canada's first Nobel Prize recipient" in the area of medicine; "and

"Whereas this great Canadian's original homestead, located in the town of New Tecumseth," near Alliston, "is deteriorating and in danger of destruction because of the inaction of the Ontario Historical Society; and

"Whereas the town of New Tecumseth, under the leadership of Mayor Mike MacEachern and former Mayor Larry Keogh, has been unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the Ontario Historical Society to use part of the land to educate the public about the historical significance of the work of Sir Frederick Banting;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Minister of Culture and the Liberal government step in to ensure that the Banting homestead is kept in good repair and preserved for generations to come."

I agree with the petitioners, and I have signed it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Petitions? The member for Simcoe-Grey.

### SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** It seems to be a slow day here.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty has promised to make the needs of students a priority for his government and that students deserve to have a bright future with a good education; and

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty has promised not to give up on students or Ontario's public school system;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the provincial government work with the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board to establish an evening bus route from St. Joan of Arc High School in Barrie to the outlying communities. This would allow students to participate in extracurricular activities and help them to fulfill their potential, secure a bright future and receive the best educational experience possible, as promised to them by the Premier."

I agree with the petition and have signed it.

1550

### CARDIAC CARE

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I'm presenting this on behalf of the member for Erie-Lincoln.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Niagara region has a population of over 430,000 people and has the highest 30-day death rate in Ontario for heart failure, has the second-highest one-year death rate in Ontario for heart failure, has the second-highest heart failure readmission rates in Ontario, has the third-highest post-heart-attack one-year death rate, and is 25% higher than the Ontario average for ischemic heart disease deaths; and

"Whereas in fiscal year 2002-03, Niagara region residents had 1,230 admissions to hospital for heart failure, 1,150 patients admitted to hospital for acute heart attack, 862 admissions to hospital for ischemic heart disease, 93 admissions to hospital for cardiomyopathy, a repatriation population of 458 post-angioplasty patients, 341 admissions to out-of-region hospitals for coronary



artery disease, 328 post-coronary artery bypass patients, 92 heart valve replacement patients and three heart transplant patients; and

"Whereas all of the above-mentioned 4,503 heart patients are eligible for cardiac rehab in Niagara, which translates to 1,500 new patients who would access Niagara cardiac rehab services every year; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care funds cardiac rehabilitation in 24 communities but does not fund cardiac rehabilitation services anywhere in Niagara. Heart Niagara, a registered non-profit corporation, provides services in one of the largest cardiac rehab programs in Ontario at no charge to the patient but relies on funding through donations and special events;

"Therefore we, the undersigned concerned citizens of Niagara, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That cardiac rehabilitation services in Niagara be funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, as they are in 24 other Ontario communities, and made comprehensive and accessible."

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ENDING MANDATORY RETIREMENT STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2005

#### LOI DE 2005 MODIFIANT DES LOIS POUR ÉLIMINER LA RETRAITE OBLIGATOIRE

Mr. Peters moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement /  
Projet de loi 211, Loi modifiant le Code des droits de la personne et d'autres lois pour éliminer la retraite obligatoire.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Mr. Peters.

**Hon. Steve Peters (Minister of Labour):** Thank you very much, Speaker. I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the MPP for Oakville.

I'm honoured to be here today to speak to the second reading of Bill 211, this government's mandatory retirement legislation. This bill, if passed, would end mandatory retirement for most employees in Ontario. This is about choice for Ontarians. Employees would be able to choose when they retire from their jobs.

Bill 211 would not undermine present entitlements to pensions, benefits and standards of health care that we enjoy in this province. Employees would still be entitled to receive their Canada pension plan benefits when they turn 65. In fact, perhaps I should call this un-mandatory retirement, because this bill would give Ontarians the right to choose when and if they will retire from the workplace. That is the basis of our bill—choice.

I would personally urge all members of this House to support a bill that would create more freedom and more

options for the citizens of this great province. In fact, how could you not support this legislation that provides more choices for our citizens? The intent of our bill is to end mandatory retirement in a way that is fair and balanced, and protect existing entitlements to pension, early retirement and benefits.

At the present time in Ontario, many employees face mandatory retirement when they reach the age of 65. The employee must leave the workplace and part company with not only his or her employer but with many friends and colleagues as well. Sometimes the employer is put at a disadvantage, because the organization may be losing someone with unique skills and knowledge. There are those who do not wish to leave their jobs. They enjoy their work and they feel they have much to contribute. People have goals that do not end when they reach the age of 65.

The intent of this bill is to simply give all citizens the right to choose when they want to leave the workplace. This legislation is a simple acknowledgement of what we already know: Skills, ability, commitment and drive do not suddenly evaporate when somebody turns 65. In fact, in many cases employees are forced to leave a long-time job they love, only to take their years of experience and skills to a new and unfamiliar employer or organization. There have been many cases in Ontario where organizations and educational facilities have lost valued employees through this long-standing and, let's face it, rather archaic policy.

The present punitive rules force these men and women, some with international standing, to drop projects while their research is left unfinished. They must walk away from their accomplishments, although they still had much to contribute to their chosen fields. This troubling policy was highlighted in June 2001, when the Ontario Human Rights Commission released a paper entitled *Time for Action: Advancing Human Rights for Older Ontarians*. In it, the commission stated that our mandatory retirement policies undermine the dignity and sense of self-worth of older workers. Now, let's just think about that for a minute. We have a policy on the books that undermines the dignity and self-worth of a large segment of our population, yet many of us, unfortunately, have accepted this as the norm. We continue to accept this as the norm because we have not taken the time to look at the possible repercussions to our citizens. It's just not right.

This legislation, if passed, would help address present inequities while helping to bolster the dignity and self-worth of the older segment of our society. We have many examples of older men and women whose contributions to our society were only possible through their many years of experience. A living example is an 84-year-old local legend, well known to all of us in Ontario: Hazel McCallion, the mayor of Mississauga and the longest-serving mayor here in Canada. "Hurricane" Hazel was a mere 57 years old in 1978 when she was first elected mayor. She didn't turn 65 until her fourth term in office. But she was not even close at that time to reaching her political stride as she continued to shape the future of the

ever-expanding city of Mississauga. Mayor McCallion is now 84 years old and serving her 10th consecutive term. No one told her she had to retire because she was too old to contribute to our society. Actually, I don't think there is anyone foolish enough to even suggest retirement to Mayor McCallion.

I look at a friend from my riding, an individual who I got to know, John Kenneth Galbraith, a respected scholar, author and adviser to presidents and leaders, who just last week celebrated his 97th birthday. Mr. Galbraith has given much and continues to do so. He wasn't forced to retire at the age of 65.

People can affect the world around them at any age, even when they reach the so-called golden age of retirement. Examples such as these were evident when our research team studied mandatory retirement policies around the globe. We looked at other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world. In Ontario, we held meetings, focus groups and consultations with stakeholders and the general public. Representatives from the Ministry of Labour travelled across this province gathering information, accepting submissions and speaking with organizations and individuals about this issue.

At this time, I want to personally thank my parliamentary assistant, Kevin Flynn, and the Ministry of Labour staff. Thank you, Kevin and staff, for your hard work and dedication as you travelled around this great province.

I also think it's important that we acknowledge other individuals who have strived to end mandatory retirement. Mike Colle introduced twice in this Legislature private member's bills to end mandatory retirement, and my predecessor Chris Bentley, who ensured that the idea of the bill moved forward. But also, members of the NDP: David Wininger in 1992, bucking against his own party, introduced a private member's bill, and many members of the NDP spoke in favour of the end of mandatory retirement in 1992, only to see that bill quashed by the Premier of the day.

As well, I think it is important that we acknowledge the contributions of Carl DeFaria, the former minister of seniors, who introduced Bill 68 in 2003. We've had this agenda in front of us too many times. The time for action is now.

**1600**

Mr. Flynn, the MPP for Oakville, and the ministry staff, consulted key stakeholder groups in every corner of this province. They included a total of 103 written submissions from organizations, and 125 submissions and personal presentations from 100 individuals during public consultations. The various groups and organizations included employer groups, human resource organizations, labour and union interests, the educational field, professional associations, seniors and organizations for retired persons. This team also held 17 focus groups with labour experts and representatives from various industries.

Premier McGuinty and our government have fine-tuned this legislation by incorporating many of the ideas

and suggestions that came from these discussions. We crafted this bill based on extensive and exhaustive research, compiled by Mr. Flynn and his committee from the Ministry of Labour. Broad government involvement included such diverse interests as the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Attorney General and others.

We also set up a dedicated mandatory retirement hotline, which has received many queries from the general public about our proposed legislation and how it will affect their lives and our lives. You will be hearing some of these questions and comments when parliamentary assistant Kevin Flynn addresses the House.

We have proceeded with this bill because it is the right thing to do. It is important that our debate here be rooted in facts: facts about what the bill actually proposes and facts that would dispel any rumours about what it does not intend.

One of the reasons I am here today is to provide some of these facts to this House so there are no misunderstandings about the intent of this bill. Let me state again to this House as well as the general public: The basis of this legislation is simply about choice. We know there is opposition to this legislation that says this will be a work-until-you-drop bill. There are those who say this bill is making people work longer. This is just not the case. Again, this bill is about choice.

Now, there are critics who say this bill is not what the province of Ontario needs. They say this bill means nothing without forcing employers to extend benefits, and that without looking at pension reforms, the quality of life of workers is not going to be adequately addressed.

This bill is about choice. This bill is about ending discrimination in Ontario. This bill is about mature people keeping their dignity and keeping the respect they have earned and deserve.

Some will say this is an elitist bill, meant only for professionals. I say that the mature workers of this province should not be underestimated. Age should not mean that you no longer have value in our society, that you no longer have anything to contribute. That is just not true. We believe you have the right to choose. You have the right to be treated with fairness. You have the right to work past the age of 65.

Our government went out and conducted extensive consultations. We have taken the time to get this right. We have taken the time to ensure that Bill 211 is fair and balanced. Bill 211 gives an employee the right to choose if he or she wishes to work beyond the age of 65. On the other hand, just as now, if people want to retire before their 65th birthday, they're going to be free to do so, and we wish them well.

Some may ask questions about their pensions. In ending mandatory retirement, it is our goal not to undermine the existing entitlements to employer-sponsored pensions. The new bill, if passed, does not amend the Ontario Pension Benefits Act. As well, this legislation



has no impact on entitlement to Canada pension plan benefits. That is a federal program, of course, and could not be affected by provincial changes. All eligible citizens will continue to receive Canada pension benefits when they've turned 65. These benefits will be collected whether they continue to work in the workplace or work at home in their gardens.

Of course, of concern to many is the possible change to seniors' discounts through various venues in our society. Not to worry—the bill would not change those. It would not remove from seniors their well-deserved senior's discount at movies or for bus fares. Let me assure you, there's nothing being proposed that would impact or prohibit such policies. In fact, the code specifically allows for programs to provide benefits to seniors. The McGuinty government firmly believes that seniors in this province have paid their dues. They truly deserve any discounts they may presently receive. Bill 211 would not change that.

As for insured benefits that some employers offer, the status quo would be maintained with respect to disability plans, life insurance plans and health benefits. Whether to offer these kinds of benefits has always been up to employers. Let me be clear about this: The provision of insured benefits to workers aged 65 and older would continue to be at the employer's discretion.

Workers 65 and over would still maintain their rights to access provincial benefit plans such as the Ontario drug benefit plan. This would not change under our proposed legislation.

We're also fully aware that the passage of this bill would result in various policy and societal changes in the workplace. This is one of the reasons that it would not become law for one year. We want to give employers the time to update their workplace policies and practices regarding older workers and give employees the time to consider their choices.

One of the important aspects of this bill is that abolishing mandatory retirement would have no effect on the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. The WSIA is designed as a fully integrated insurance system to assist injured workers with some replacement income until they are able to return to paid employment. The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board has a statutory responsibility to preserve the integrity of this insurance plan. For that reason, under this legislation, age-based provisions under WSIA would remain. The status quo would remain.

Some may ask about collective agreements. If this legislation becomes law, most collective agreements in the province would not be allowed to discriminate on the basis of age. Let me be very clear on this point: Collective agreements under provincial jurisdiction, as opposed to those involving federal workers, could not contain mandatory retirement provisions. In other words, most unionized workers could not be forced to retire at a certain age.

There may be cases in which an individual is unable to meet the requirements of a physically demanding job because of his or her age. However, whether age would

be a bona fide occupational requirement would have to be determined on a case-by-case basis. Outside of the very few jobs where age may be a bona fide occupational requirement, employers would not be able to terminate an employee once they've reached a designated age.

However, the ability of employers to offer voluntary early retirement packages would remain unchanged by this legislation. Therefore, employers both in unionized and non-unionized workplaces would still be allowed to negotiate voluntary early retirement incentive packages for their employees. The law does not prohibit this now and would not change with the passage of Bill 211.

As for our young people, our research has shown that ending mandatory retirement will not impact negatively on younger workers. Other jurisdictions have ended mandatory retirement and they have not seen a resulting loss of employment opportunities for young people. In fact, there has been a trend where workers choose to retire early. We need to make sure that all workers are given the option to stay if they choose. Young workers will be able to gain invaluable knowledge from their more experienced colleagues who decide to continue working.

As you can plainly see if you take the time to read through the bill, there is no downside to proceeding with this legislation. It's a win-win situation for both the employer and the employee. That's why the McGuinty government has moved forward with this legislation. That's why I urge everyone in this House to support our efforts that will benefit all of our citizens. Again, I reiterate: This legislation is about choice.

As we previously explained, this would not take effect until one year after the bill receives royal assent. This would provide a transition period for employers to adjust their relevant human resources practices and changes in policy.

And, no, the bill will not be retroactive. We realize that, unfortunately, there will be many people caught in this gap. We strongly suggest that if you do wish to continue working, you discuss the matter with your employer well in advance of your retirement date. Both parties can negotiate with the knowledge that this government intends to abolish mandatory retirement.

**1610**

Ending mandatory retirement is not a new concept. It was first recommended in this province in 1987. Private members' bills were introduced in 1992, 2002 and 2003, and the government bill in 2003. But other countries, including the United States, Australia and New Zealand, have prohibited mandatory retirement. In Canada, mandatory retirement has been abolished in various forms in Alberta, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Both Quebec and Manitoba abolished this practice more than 20 years ago, in 1982 and 1983 respectively. There has been minimal impact on the labour market in those provinces and absolutely no change to existing pensions and benefits.

As we all know, the trend in our society is to retire as soon as possible. This trend has been encouraged by

flexible provisions in some pension plans. In this day and age, people are living longer, healthier, and hopefully happier lives. Many start second careers, others dive into their hobbies and lifestyle interests, and some take that dream trip they've been planning for years. We have about 1.5 million seniors in Ontario. Projections show that within a quarter of a century, this figure will double to about 3.2 million. No one likes to be told that they are too old to work, too old to play, too old to contribute to society. In opposing this bill, you are denying those individuals that opportunity.

This government is fully aware that there are segments of our population who have entered the workforce late in their life and cannot afford to retire at 65. New citizens from foreign countries may have been in mid-worklife when they entered the Ontario workforce to start again. The reality is that some people need to continue to work. Why would you want to deny them the opportunity to do that? This government does not want to condemn them to facing an uncertain financial future. That is why we have acted to restore their ability to choose. To underscore this point with another quote, "Cessation of work is not accompanied by cessation of expenses." This was the reality for Cato the Elder in Rome during the second century BC, and it remains the reality today, not only in Ontario but also throughout the world.

In closing, let me emphasize again the basic and simple theory behind Bill 211: It's about choice. That's the only intent of Bill 211. This legislation would provide more freedom and more options for Ontarians. Employees would have the choice as to whether they wish to retire at age 65, to retire before 65 or to continue their productive working lives.

As the Minister of Labour, I'm very proud of this bill. Again, I urge all-party support for Bill 211. Support for this legislation, which benefits all citizens of Ontario, should be made freely, without thought of party lines or colours. It's a non-partisan issue.

We have a great historic opportunity in front of us today. We have the opportunity to end discrimination in Ontario. We can end that discrimination because we need to give our citizens that right to choose. Bill 211 is about choice. I urge all my colleagues to support Bill 211.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Michael Prue):** I was not in the House. Is the time being shared? Yes?

The member for Oakville.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn (Oakville):** It's a pleasure today to stand in my place to support this important legislation. In doing so, I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of former Minister of Labour Chris Bentley, the current Minister of Labour, Steve Peters, and the terrific staff in the minister's office and in the Ministry of Labour who worked on this piece of proposed legislation.

As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour, I had the privilege and the opportunity of leading a series of public meetings gathering input on just how we should go about implementing an end to mandatory retirement in Ontario. The personal stories I heard were moving, as have been the many stories that have come to light either

in written submissions to us or in reports on the television and radio and in newspapers. I travelled the province and I heard stories from hundreds of individuals: people who loved their jobs, people who needed their jobs, people who didn't know what they would do with themselves without work, people who define themselves by their work, people who are concerned about what would become of them without the income derived from that work, people who wanted a choice, people who needed a choice and people who deserved the dignity of being able to lead their lives down the paths they decide.

We as a government have no business making that choice for them. They made that abundantly clear to us. We as a government believe in ensuring that people have the freedom to choose when to finish their working lives of their own accord. As far as is possible, we would like to see people have that choice where it is not a matter of health and not a matter of competence.

We believe that mandatory retirement has simply no place in a society that truly values its members. We believe it has no place in our society today. So in our province, we are moving in step with other jurisdictions, both in Canada and abroad, to eliminate it. We are moving to enshrine freedom of choice in retirement in Ontario.

Exactly why is this personal choice so important to the people of Ontario? Well, let's just imagine a few cases—fictitious but based in rock-hard reality and the kind of stories that I heard all over Ontario as I spoke to people, stories about what it means to be refused this freedom of choice.

Imagine a woman at 65, many years of service as a qualified nurse in an Ontario hospital, children grown, perhaps she's been divorced for a number of years. She depends on her career income to sustain her. "But," says her employer, "the answer is no. You can't stay." She goes to her supervisor. She pledges to take any test that's deemed appropriate to prove she is still competent and can still carry on with her duties, that her capacity to work did not diminish mysteriously on the day that she turned 65. She knows she can still do the job. She is willing to meet any kind of ongoing performance evaluations. Her supervisor is sympathetic and hates to lose this valuable nurse, to see this person go, but the policy is in place. She simply has to go under the current regime in Ontario.

How is this fair? She doesn't want to go; her supervisor doesn't want to lose her. There's no logical reason why she must go; just an old, outdated rule on the books that allows mandatory retirement at the age of 65. That policy deserves to be consigned to the dustbin of history, and that is exactly what we as a government intend to do with the passage of this proposed bill: We intend to consign mandatory retirement to the dustbin.

Let's imagine another case. Here's a man with 40 years of experience in industry, not unlike my own father. He's been lauded for his expertise, his education and, on a very human level, as an all-round good fellow to work with. He's one of those people who over the years has perhaps mentored many up-and-comers, giving



a boost to the careers of a lot of young people who were working under him at the time. He walks into work on his 65th birthday, and it's going to be the last time. When he walks out that day, it's for good, whether he likes it or not. His career has been his life's work. He has spent practically his whole adult life with this employer in this field of expertise or skilled trade, but it's company policy. He has to go. What a waste. That is what we as a government are saying: What a waste of human potential.

Here's a lab researcher. She's fit as a fiddle. The doctors she works with don't have to retire, but she does. Tell me why that is fair. Even though she is just as capable of carrying on as they are, but no, it's the rule for her position. She simply has no choice under the current regime. No choice—that's what this is all about, isn't it? So many valuable people in our society today simply do not have that choice.

1620

Let me end with a true tale about a real man. It's a story that received some significant publicity last spring in the media. The story is as related in the *Ottawa Citizen* of June 16, 2005. I paraphrase from the story that was written by Pauline Tam.

Weixuan Li began his life in Shanghai. After high school, he laboured in the salt mines and chemical factories of China for about 20 years. On a very, very meagre income, this gentleman spent his evenings with library textbooks on his own time to teach himself mathematics and literature. By 1978, he had published academic papers on his own—this is a man who was working in salt mines—and caught the attention of some of China's top mathematicians. They quickly found him a position at the Changsha Railway University in China. He quickly proved himself and was soon instructing students who had twice his credentials. So great became his reputation that by the 1980s he was actually permitted to begin to lecture abroad, and one of the countries he chose to lecture in was right here, Canada.

But his last trip to Canada was going to be a one-way voyage. In Canada as a visiting lecturer, Mr. Li applied for and was granted permanent residency. Eventually, his family was permitted by the Chinese government to leave China and joined him here in Canada four years later.

In Canada, he worked part-time for years at Carleton University. Eventually he achieved status as a full-time mathematics professor. Let me quote directly from the newspaper story: "He has won teaching awards and become a respected scholar in math and computer science, with three books and more than two dozen academic papers to his name. But at the end of the month, Mr. Li will be forced to leave his job as a full-time instructor at Carleton University, having turned 65 last November. At Carleton, as at many workplaces across this province, that's the age of mandatory retirement today."

Having worked for so many years in a part-time capacity, Mr. Li went without full benefits or a pension. For him, working past 65 was a desire and a need.

Imagine: A man has a dream like that. He begins as a labourer in a Third World economy, in China, works all

on his own to become an internationally respected expert in the field of mathematics, and suddenly—bang—at the age of 65, we take away his job and his livelihood, after all that man has been through. How can we in good conscience do that?

Don't get me wrong; I'm not condemning the university. Mandatory retirement policies are quite prevalent in our society. Right now, they're the norm. It's accepted, it's expected, and some people would like to see it continue. It's so pervasive that people think it's actually written into the law of the land, but it's not the law. It's not the law, and I think we need to make that clear.

What will be the law, if this legislation passes, is a ban on removing from jobs the people like the nurse, like the industry expert, like the researcher. It will be a ban on removing the reason to get up in the morning from those who love their jobs and careers, and a ban on removing the incomes from those who need them. It's a ban on removing from productive service to our society the likes of Mr. Li. It's a ban on removing choice. To my mind, everyone of good conscience in this House surely supports choice. Every one of us should support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** I just want to add a couple of comments, in the brief time I have available, on looking at the merit of this bill. I think there is probably general agreement. The minister, in his earlier remarks, went back over the legislative history of this initiative and demonstrated the fact that there has been support for moving in this direction over a period of years by individuals and parties on all sides.

When we look at some of the demographics in our province and in our country, it would seem that this is going to become, frankly, an imperative. When you look at the changes in the demographics and the kinds of shortages in particular areas of our economy, then it seems to make a very compelling argument that the expertise, the experience and, I would say, the wisdom of a few grey hairs in our community and in our workplace are appropriate.

I also think that as people look at the pressures of modern life, particularly those fiscal pressures, there are people who have lived a lifestyle where they haven't planned for their retirement, so there are those kinds of pressures as well. I look around us and I see areas like tax increases and increasing hydro rates, energy costs. These are all things that obviously will have an enormous and devastating impact on people with fixed incomes.

So I'm quite sure that there will be more and more people who will begin to recognize how important it is not to have mandatory retirement.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Mr. Speaker, doesn't it just rot your socks when you hear the government talking about ending so-called mandatory retirement? We know there are thousands, tens of thousands, multiples of tens of thousands of people over 65 working all over Ontario because they have to, because they don't have any choice. They're Wal-Mart greeters; they're working in fast-food joints; they're working in minimum-wage retail operations.

The government says this is about choice. New Democrats say it's about values. The government says it's going to change the culture. We agree. It's going to change the culture in a most regrettable way.

I'm a child of immigrant parents who worked hard—incredibly hard—and their parents even harder before them, and who struggled and fought as trade unionists, among other things, so that their grandchildren wouldn't have to work until they dropped dead in the workplace, but rather could enjoy things like pensions and a retirement at a reasonable enough age so that you can spend those senior years doing the things you didn't have the time to do while you were working: perhaps volunteering, perhaps teaching English as a second language, perhaps helping raise your grandkids—and if you don't have grandkids, somebody else's—perhaps doing educational work, because seniors get special access, as they should, to most colleges and universities.

You've got a government here that is trying to create a culture where people work until they drop. That's not moving forward. That's moving into not just the last century but the century before that. That's not the kind of world your parents worked hard to build.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** I listened very carefully to the Minister of Labour and the comments from the parliamentary assistant, my good friend the member for Oakville. Indeed it is, in my view, about choice. In my community I have a university and a community college. A number of the professors at Trent University and even the instructors and professors at the community college in Peterborough will take the option to retire at 65, and there are those who want to continue to work on some of their personal academic pursuits in terms of research and others who want to share that vast knowledge they have with the student community, be it at the university or community college.

There are a number of people who, because of the better lifestyles that I believe we're all leading now, healthier lifestyles, are in much better shape at age 65 today than they were 30 or 40 years ago, and some of them have high levels of energy and just want to continue to work. I think they should be given that opportunity if they want to do so, and that essentially is what this bill is about.

If you look through history, a couple of Prime Ministers come to mind. The late Lester Pearson, in his early 60s, late 60s, went on to have a very distinguished career. I would say he was probably one of the most underrated Prime Ministers in Canadian history with the contribution he made in a minority Parliament working for others.

There are examples all through the academic and business world of those individuals who I believe can make a significant contribution. Let them have that opportunity. This bill will bring Ontario into sync with other provinces in Canada to get rid of this discrimination. I believe we should move it ahead on that basis.

1630

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound—Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to get up today to add some comments to the

speech from the Minister of Labour and the member from Oakville on Bill 211, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement. Certainly, the Minister of Labour gave some excellent examples of those who are being very productive beyond our current retirement age: Hazel McCallion, the mayor of Mississauga, and you could add other people to that list. Our current Prime Minister, I believe, is past the age of 65.

**Mr. Kormos:** But he should retire.

**Mr. Miller:** I'm hearing from the wings that maybe he should retire.

Winston Churchill, I think, was at his prime through the World War II years beyond the age of 65.

But here in Ontario, what we're facing is the average citizen who can't afford to retire. They can't afford to retire because of all the Liberal broken promises since they were elected over two years ago now. Of course, the largest broken promise was not to raise your taxes. In fact, they've brought on the health tax, which was in the paper recently. It's doubling this year. When you add on all the extra fees and taxes that the average family is paying now, it's over \$2,000. So unfortunately, the choice as to whether you can retire or not is disappearing for many families when they're faced with increased electricity prices and increased gas prices.

We will be supporting this bill, although I know there are questions that will need to be addressed in committee. This bill, of course, was brought forward by the past government, by the Honourable Carl DeFaria when he was Minister of Citizenship, over two and a half years ago. So I might ask, what took so darn long? But I look forward to hearing the member from Simcoe—Grey, who, as labour critic, will be speaking for the next hour on this bill. I'm sure he's got a lot of insight on this bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** Either the minister or the member from Oakville has two minutes in which to respond.

**Hon. Mr. Peters:** I'd like to thank the members from York North, Niagara Centre, Peterborough and Parry Sound—Muskoka for their comments. I appreciate hearing the support that's going to be coming forward.

But I think what really perplexes me is that we have the third party here, the NDP, which says that they stand up for human rights and for ending discrimination, and they're prepared to stand up and block this bill—a bill that will end discrimination in the province of Ontario, a bill that would give citizens in this province choice. Yet the NDP wants to continue to talk about the 19th and 18th century way of doing business. Well, the Liberal Party believes in choice. The Liberal Party believes in listening to what the Human Rights Commission has said. We need to bring the human rights laws of this province into the 21st century, because this is about choice. It's about doing the right thing for people who are over the age of 65. This is the right thing to do, and the NDP is not prepared to support that. We'll let them account for their comments in that regard.

I appreciate some of the comments that were made. I think the member from York North hit it very clearly,



that the demographics of this province have changed, that we're home to 100,000 new immigrants a year coming into this province who want new opportunities. This is about new opportunities, this is about choice, and it's about ending discrimination. Premier McGuinty believes that it's not right to discriminate in this province. We're going to end discrimination in this province with the passage of this legislation.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** I want to thank the minister and his parliamentary assistant, the member from Oakville, for their comments. I listened carefully.

As my colleague from Parry Sound-Muskoka said, we're generally in favour of this legislation in the Progressive Conservative caucus. In fact, when the bill was introduced back on June 7—I'll just read Hansard from June 7 of this year—my colleague the then labour critic, Elizabeth Witmer, the member for Kitchener-Waterloo, said:

"I'm very pleased to respond to the announcement made today by the Minister of Labour regarding mandatory retirement and the end thereof. I guess the question I would have for the minister is, what has taken you so long? Our government two years ago introduced Bill 68, an act to do exactly that. It was introduced by the Minister of Citizenship, the Honourable C. DeFaria. Two years later, we have the introduction of a bill" by the Liberal government.

Mrs. Witmer goes on to say:

"If this bill had actually been approved,"—referring to Mr. DeFaria's bill—"it would have come into law in January of this year and we already would be in a situation where we would have eliminated mandatory retirement. Having said that, we do support this initiative, obviously. We believe it's extremely important that everybody in this province have the opportunity to make the choice about when they would retire from work. It's particularly important for many women, immigrants and others who have maybe come into the workforce later in life and simply don't have the financial resources or pensions that would enable them to retire earlier. We also know that many people today live much healthier, longer lives. This provides them with an opportunity."

Mrs. Witmer said that on June 7, and I generally agree with those comments.

I'd also point out that most other jurisdictions in Canada have eliminated mandatory retirement at age 64. I'll note that all provinces forbid age-based discrimination in employment in their human rights statutes. However, in all provinces there are circumstances under which retirement at a certain age can be required. Ontario, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador limit their human rights age protection to those under 65. This is the current situation. Newfoundland permits mandatory retirement at even lower ages, if provided for in a retirement or pension plan. Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI, Manitoba and Alberta have no limits on their age protection. In other words, there's no mandatory retirement. New

Brunswick and Nova Scotia presently allow mandatory retirement if it's pursuant to a bona fide retirement or pension plan.

As the minister has said, this bill would give choice to people approaching age 65 who might otherwise have had to retire.

I think of the example in my own life when I was Minister of Energy, Science and Technology and I had a very capable deputy minister named Ken Knox. I know Ken didn't want to leave the public service. He had been in the public service for many years. I think he pretty well had his full pension, but he really enjoyed his work. He had been an excellent Deputy Minister of Agriculture and then came over to be deputy minister with me at the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology. It was a sad day when I had to go to Ken's retirement. As happens in so many cases when we had mandatory retirement, you kind of had to skirt the law and you would come back as a consultant. He ended up working for one of the government agencies that's at arm's length, that allows him to do that. I don't know if Ken would mind that I mentioned his name, but he was someone who I know didn't want to leave, who really enjoyed public service.

You mentioned Hazel McCallion. Of course we're all big fans of Hazel. She actually sat on my advisory committee representing AMO for about two years or more. It was called the minister's electricity advisory committee and we would meet once a month. She only missed one meeting in two years. Unfortunately, that was during the week that her husband passed away, but she was right back the next month for the meeting. You're right: Hazel, who is the mayor of Mississauga, is full of energy. We wish her well and hope that she continues to serve the people of Mississauga in the capacity in which she chooses, which is to be mayor. I think she's in the Guinness Book of Records already as one of, if not the longest-serving mayor in the world, and more power to her.

I'll take the minister's word for it—and the lawyers who have briefed us from the Ministry of Labour—that this bill really won't upset the status quo in terms of your pension benefits, your retirement benefits, the government drug plans, things that you are entitled to or have earned already. You will still be able to receive those at 65 and older even if you continue to work after age 65. So on the face of it, it seems that this bill is somewhat harmless and won't upset people's livelihood if they've already earned a pension.

I want to say with a bit of self-interest here that one of the first bills we passed in 1995, to my regret now, was to get rid of the MPPs' gold-plated pension plan. I'm going to have to work for many more years, if my constituents will put up with me. On September 6 under the old plan—that was my 15th anniversary—I would have had \$78,000 a year for the rest of my life. If I lived to 73, I gave up \$2.73 million because I was 42 when I would have been pensioned out. That's ridiculous but that was the gold-plated pension plan, and that's what federal MPs are getting now: 75% of their best three years.

1640

We make roughly \$86,500 as normal MPPs. I know that for the rookie MP in my riding—she's doing a very good job—her starting salary is \$147,000 plus a full pension that is worth unlimited amounts of money when you think of it. We did our part to reduce the deficit and we saved a few million dollars by doing that, but I certainly regret that particular vote. It was 15 years ago. When you're a young person, you don't think that much about your pension.

I regret that we didn't tell the people of Ontario that we did that. Most people still say, "How are things in Ottawa, Jim?" on the weekends. I have been there 15 years, and my family has lived in the riding over 200 years, and they still say that to me. Most people absolutely don't believe that you gave up the gold-plated pension plan. They still think you're going to get a cheque in the mail every month after a few years serving here. My predecessor, George McCague, who served here 15 years, gets \$65,000 a year. That's his pension, and more power to him. That was the rule at the time.

I would call upon the government, before we all starve to death—I certainly don't look like I'm starving to death now, but there is a possibility in the future that there is going to be some hardship without a pension. We had a couple of suicides in the past where people couldn't make ends meet after leaving public office. We shouldn't forget that.

It has been the track record for MPPs to get good jobs after leaving this place. Isn't that great? We wish everyone well, but sometimes luck isn't with you, and a lot of people don't want to hire people whom they perceive were partisan in their lives or people whom they perceive worked for government, and don't realize how hard we work, seven days a week, and on some days, you think 24 hours a day. Most people say to me when I'm leaving this building, "Have a good weekend," and I think, "Have a good weekend? I've had one Sunday off in 12." Most members here would never get a weekend off, particularly if you're in a small town, a rural riding.

This Friday I will do about nine events. That's a particularly busy one, but you would average four or five if you can get to them all, with birthdays and anniversaries and ribbon cuttings, a cenotaph opening last week, school graduations, fall fairs. I love them all; it's great. But I pity those members who have families, especially young children. You mustn't see them very often. Of course, traditionally the divorce rate among politicians is higher than in any other profession. We tie dentists. My dad is probably a little old, but it's pretty high.

It's an interesting life and a good life, but I think we did cut ourselves short with respect to pensions. Therefore, mandatory retirement is something I would like to see ended. I know many of my family members don't even have the good fortune of complaining about having given up a pension because they don't have one, either.

**Mr. Mario Sergio (York West):** You'll have to work until 95, Jim.

**Mr. Wilson:** Yes, work until 95. There are lots of people out there that don't even have the privilege of

getting rid of their pension because they don't have one to begin with, and many of those people would like to work, plus we need the talent.

If I don't blab on too long, I will get to get to the Conference Board of Canada's report that was released yesterday, recommending that Canada end mandatory retirement, indicating that in the year 2050—there are different stages, but we really hit a problem 40 years from now, when there will be as many retired people as there are people working at the rate things are going. It becomes a horrible conundrum in terms of taxation, in terms of the burden on younger people at that time.

If you look at the charts in their report yesterday, the burden ratchets up, beginning at about the year 2011, six years from now, through to the next 45 or 50 years, where gradually we'll have more older people who might retire—if there was mandatory retirement, they'd have to retire—and not enough people working. It's not that older people are taking young people's jobs. The report points out that we need the skills of older people. We need to change our society and have more respect for our elders, and we need to change our workplaces and our attitudes and our laws to accommodate them past age 65.

The member for Niagara Centre, Mr. Kormos, indicated they're all going to work at Wal-Mart. If you look at the Conference Board of Canada's report, they indicate we need older people in every sector; we need them in the high-tech sector, we need them in the nursing profession, in the medical professions, we need them throughout—good-paying jobs in the economy—and we need to do what the government is doing today, although it's too bad we didn't pass this thing a couple of years ago, with second reading of Bill 211. I'd better actually put the name of the bill on the record at some point: An Act to amend the Human Rights Code and certain other Acts to end mandatory retirement.

Not everyone agrees with this, and in my remarks here I'll point out that some of the unions and that don't like us voting to end mandatory retirement or introducing legislation to end mandatory retirement, but I'm not totally sure of their motives. I'll read, in fairness, some of their press releases and let them speak for themselves.

I will note, to the government's credit, that they did hear, as the minister said, from over 50 groups and more than 100 individuals who participated in the public meetings surrounding this bill. Questions that the government asked participants to consider were: Would ending mandatory retirement reduce skills shortages in areas like nursing, teaching or skilled trades? Would ending mandatory retirement affect pensions and other benefits? What impact would ending mandatory retirement have on recent entrants to the workforce or those who take time away from it?

If this legislation is passed, as the minister has said—I'll just give you the context of the legislation and the background and what it does. I want to credit the Ontario legislative library for their notes in this regard. This legislation would:

—amend the [Human Rights] Code to ensure that people 65 and older could not be forced to retire;



“—provide a one-year transition period to allow workplaces to prepare for this change. The legislation would be effective one year after receiving royal assent;

“—prohibit collective agreements from including mandatory retirement. Mandatory retirement provisions in existing agreements would no longer be enforceable once the legislation took effect;

“—the ‘bona fide occupational requirement’ provisions permitted under the code will continue. By that, we mean employment requirements or qualifications that are necessary for the performance of essential job duties. This would not undermine, as ... indicated, the age at which individuals could collect, for example, the Canada pension plan.”

That paragraph also refers to the fact that certain professions, like police officers and firefighters, will continue to be able to retire before 65. This particular piece of legislation doesn't affect the status quo in that regard. Those are professions where it is generally agreed that people enter those professions rather young, and while they're physically able and physically fit, and need to have the choice and the right to exit those professions before they wear out and are no longer perhaps able to do the job—although we do have a lot of police officers who eventually do detective work or desk jobs or whatever, but generally they're allowed to go and their pensions are adjusted so they can get out at age 55 or so and start a second career.

Ontarians might think—and I know Mr. Kormos, the member for Niagara Centre, will probably dwell on this in his remarks, and more power to him. There is no real law that actually says you have to retire. There are bits and pieces of law, like the Public Service Act, which this bill will amend and end that practice. But there is no mandatory retirement act.

The fact is, as the library points out in its notes on the legal framework in Ontario, “No law in Ontario forces people to retire at any age. The Ontario Human Rights Code explicitly forbids age discrimination in employment. Section 5(1) states that:

“Every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to employment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, same-sex partnership status, family status or disability.”

1650

Therefore, an employer cannot refuse to hire a worker because the individual is 45, for example. However, the ban on age discrimination is limited by two important clauses.

Section 10.1 of the Human Rights Code says, “‘age’ means an age that is 18 years or more ... and less than 65.” Section 24.1 of the Human Rights Code says, “The right under section 5 to equal treatment with respect to employment is not infringed where ... (b) the discrimination in employment is for reasons of age, sex, record of offences, marital status or same-sex partnership status if the age, sex, record of offences, marital status or same-

sex partnership status of the applicant is a reasonable and bona fide qualification.”

In other words, if there is a reason why you have to retire earlier, because it's a qualification for the job and it's agreed upon and generally understood, you are able to retire before age 65. In other words, the Ontario Human Rights Code permits older and younger workers to be treated differently. A labour contract can stipulate that workers must retire at 65. Furthermore, if a job requires that workers be a certain age in order to perform duties adequately, age discrimination can be justified.

The second restriction is often called a BFOQ or a bona fide occupation qualification. In Canada, the current situation is that the Canadian Human Rights Act, which applies only to employment under federal jurisdiction, forbids discrimination based on age and does not include any exceptions. However, like Ontario, the statute permits bona fide occupation qualifications, BFOQs, pertaining to age. Section 9.2 also allows employers to dismiss employees who have reached the normal age of retirement for individuals working in positions similar to the position of that individual.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms gives every individual “equal protection and equal benefit of the law ... without discrimination based on ... age.” However, the charter allows modification of the rights and freedoms by reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society. Section 32 of the charter requires federal and provincial governments to comply with the charter in the areas of their authority.

The Supreme Court of Canada in *McKinney v. the University of Guelph* in 1990 ruled that employment practices requiring retirement at age 65 are a reasonable limit on equality rights. The court also ruled that the age exemptions in the Ontario Human Rights Code were similarly saved by section 1 of the charter, which is the “demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society” clause.

McKinney therefore suggests that private employers may legitimately impose mandatory retirement schemes and the provincial human rights codes may exempt certain age groups from their coverage as a compromise between the rights of individuals and the interests of competing groups.

Now, there are arguments for and against mandatory retirement, and I'll touch briefly on some of those. Advocates for the abolition of mandatory retirement raise the issue of individual rights, economic hardship and demographic changes that could lead to fiscal difficulties for benefit and pension plans in the future. Advocates for its continuation, in other words, continuing mandatory retirement, are concerned about job creation and inter-generational justice, as well as the maintenance and enrichment of present social security entitlements.

Some would argue that mandatory retirement is discriminatory, and that's what the minister argued, and I would agree. Many view mandatory retirement as a simple case of discrimination. Since we no longer ex-

clude people of colour, women etc. from the workplace, human rights advocates argue that mandatory retirement is a similar relic from our past. Forbidding mandatory retirement would extend individual rights to a previously marginalized group and permits workers to choose whether or not they wish to continue working.

Since 1977, the Ontario Human Rights Commission has been recommending that Ontario amend its Human Rights Code to remove the upper limit on age protection. In 2001, the commission issued a report specifically addressing the rights of older workers. The commission concludes, "Making a decision solely on the basis of age, and not on the basis of a person's ability to perform the essential duties of the job, is a form of unequal treatment."

Some would say mandatory retirement imposes economic hardship. Critics of mandatory retirement argue that individuals forced to retire may be left in a perilous economic situation. As I said, that could happen to some of us here. In particular, recent immigrants and women who took time out of the workforce for child-rearing purposes may have been unable to build an adequate pension or they may have no pension at all.

The federal Department of Justice review of the Canadian Human Rights Act observed, "One solution might be to improve the public pension system," and suggests that this is a desirable option. However, the review acknowledges that the abolition of mandatory retirement would be a less costly alternative for governments.

Many argue that demographic changes in the industrialized world necessitate the abolition of mandatory retirement. A report from Canadian Policy Research Networks summarizes the predicted transitions in Canada and Ontario: Average life expectancy is increasing, and many people are living well past the age of 65. At the same time, fertility has declined. While 17% of Canada's population is presently aged 60 or older, 30% will be in that bracket by the year 2050. Again, I'll hopefully get around to mentioning a bit about what the conference board had to say about that.

A report for Canada's Department of Defence highlights the potential cost of this demographic shift. The report states that population aging will put strong upward pressure on public expenditure in the areas of health care and old age security. These pressures will be compounded because the life expectancy of Canadians is continually increasing. Population aging will also slow labour force growth, reduce GDP growth and ultimately limit revenue growth to rates below those experienced historically.

The report is careful to note that other costs, such as education, will go down as the population ages. Therefore, the fiscal costs of the population aging are somewhat self-limiting. However, because older citizens still absorb more public spending, if Canada wants to reduce its indebtedness, demographic changes will lower the rate at which existing social programs can be supplemented. Of course, analysts have examined this coming demographic shift in Canada and abroad and concluded that

permitting individuals to work past 65 is a reasonable policy option.

Mandatory retirement promotes intergenerational justice. In its McKinney decision, the Supreme Court of Canada argued that eliminating mandatory retirement could increase unemployment, particularly among the young. Other advocates of mandatory retirement argue that it allows orderly employee turnover and provides the opportunity to allow younger workers to replace older workers. Mr. Kormos made that point a few moments ago.

Workers are given security until 65 and then transfer their jobs to the next generation. Mandatory retirement also allows mid-career employees to rise through the ranks as older individuals retire. Again, I think you'll see that, from the demographic shifts and the trends that are occurring in society, these arguments are old-relic arguments. They're really not up to date with what's actually happening as our population is aging, and the need to keep older people in the workforce in order to keep Canada's GDP strong and its productivity strong, because unless you're going to have—they say that 87% of future workers % will come from immigration, beginning next year, beginning as we speak. Unless you're going to have complete immigration—I think the birth rate in Canada now is about minus one. People aren't having too many children, obviously.

I think I read the other day that Quebec and France are paying people to have babies, but that's not the greatest incentive. It's apparently not working very well in Quebec, because the little bit of money you get eventually from the government doesn't match the cost of raising children at all. In fact, it doesn't even come close, obviously. It's tokenism. It's not working in France, according to the Conference Board of Canada's report yesterday. So we have to rely on immigration to keep our productivity up, and we are going to have to rely on older people remaining in the workforce or choosing to come back into the workforce, even. They may take a period of retirement—say, between 55 and 60—and come back into the workforce.

We need to adjust our training. Right now, if you're over 65, I think you can still get free university tuition, but we may need to lower that to 55 so people can retrain and keep up to date, because they may have to re-enter the workforce, especially if they don't have a good pension plan. Canada's going to need them.

1700

Critics of mandatory retirement often reply that there is little statistical support for the intergenerational argument and that it reflects faulty economic logic. If an economy is functioning well, it should be able to create as many jobs as there are workers willing to fill them, is the argument. However, many insist that the economy does not function perfectly and that some sectors may be relatively closed systems where new positions are not created until old ones are vacated. Jobs that are well-paid and intrinsically satisfying may also lure employees to remain at work past 65. For this reason, universities have



typically argued that they would be particularly affected by the abolition of mandatory retirement. There is some evidence that this is occurring in the United States.

I just want to read at this point what the Canadian Association of University Teachers said in June 2005, at the time of the introduction of this bill.

**"Ontario to End Mandatory Retirement"**

"The Ontario government has introduced legislation that will end mandatory retirement for workers aged 65 and older.

"People are healthier and living longer, so it is unfair to insist that they stop working simply because they turn 65"—that's what the labour minister said at the time. "Ending mandatory retirement would allow workers to retire based on lifestyle, circumstance and priorities." That was Chris Bentley, who was the minister at the time.

The press release from the teachers goes on: "The Ontario Human Rights Code currently does not protect people beyond age 65 from age discrimination for employment purposes." Remember, the Ontario Human Rights Code, as I read just a few moments ago, only deals with persons between age 18 and 65. It goes on to say, "As a result, employees can be forced to retire at 65.

"Academic groups in the province welcomed the legislation and called for its speedy passage.

"For more than 20 years, academics have pressured the provincial government to eliminate legalized age discrimination in the workplace, so this legislation represents a significant victory," said Michael Doucet, president of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations"—OCUFA.

"Academics in Ontario have long argued against mandatory retirement on the grounds that an academic career differs considerably from that of other employees. The process required to become a university professor is longer than other professions—10 to 12 years to get a degree, followed by several years of post-doctoral experience or contract teaching. As a result, professors have a career that often lasts less than 35 years."

The press release goes on to say: "The Ontario legislation will allow mandatory retirement to continue if it can be justified on 'bona fide occupational requirement' grounds determined under the Human Rights Code. That means employees can still be forced to retire when they turn 65, or even younger, if it can be shown they no longer meet the requirements of the job or if they cannot be accommodated without causing undue hardship to the employer.

"That has some labour groups worried. 'Younger workers in their 50s and early 60s should be asking what the effect will be on them of the [exemption] provision in this government's legislation,' warned Sid Ryan, president of CUPE Ontario.

"It raises the spectre of all employees having to prove that they are physically and intellectually able to continue performing their jobs, Ryan said.

"Others argued that the end of mandatory retirement could force many lower-income workers to stay on the job longer than they want."

Just going on with some of the notes provided by the Ontario Legislative Library, and I thank them for those. Under the heading of "Abolishing Mandatory Retirement Endangers Benefit and Pension Plans"—the minister touched on that. He assured us that this legislation would not endanger those earned benefits and pension plans that people will expect at the end of their careers, even if they choose to work beyond age 65.

I suppose the "slippery slope" argument could be there. Today the norm has been 65. The actuaries gear everything toward 65. If more people worked beyond 65, as in some jurisdictions of the world, you'd start to see the retirement rate creeping up to 67, 68, 69. It's 67 in the United States now, by law. That would worry some people, I suppose, and quite rightly, in that they'll have to work longer to receive the same benefits they would have received under the law today at age 65.

However, this particular act doesn't actually do any of that. That will have to be addressed later if we do, I'm sure, in a few years see that slippery slope. But in the jurisdictions I've been reading up on that have already ended mandatory retirement, we haven't seen—at least, it has not been brought to my attention, and I haven't seen or been able to find anything in the last few days to indicate that people's pension benefits or drug benefits or anything have been affected because of the ending of mandatory retirement.

"Advocates of mandatory retirement express concern that the focus on the right of individuals to retire when they please frames the issue in a misleading fashion. They argue that the option of working longer could become an obligation. Wayne Samuelson of the Ontario Federation of Labour argues, 'Rather than funding social services and funding pension plans so workers can afford (to retire), they'll just make it so that everyone just ends up working longer.'"

"Allan Hutchison, associate dean of Osgoode Hall Law School, acknowledges that mandatory retirement obstructs the desire of individuals to continue working. However, the rules 'offer a measure of security to many others.' He worries that privileged white-collar workers will be the major beneficiaries of the end of mandatory retirement. He concludes,

"In the absence of mandatory retirement, the various tax and other concessions made to the elderly will be open to challenge as discriminating against those under 65.... Over time, those who cease work at 65 may be regarded as a drain on the community."

Again, I would just say there that certainly the Conference Board of Canada's report yesterday indicates that older people are not going to be a drain and we'll be begging them to stay in the workforce if our productivity, our GDP and our way of life is to be preserved in Canada and in fact enhanced. If there is to be a good economic engine, we are going to need seniors and older workers to help drive that engine.

The library notes go on to indicate:

"There is some evidence that the end of mandatory retirement could create a climate penalizing workers for

leaving their jobs at 65. In the US, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 ... prohibits age discrimination for anyone over 40. Originally, this protection was withdrawn when a worker reached 65, but in 1986 the upper limit was completely removed.

"Interestingly, in 1998, the US Court of Appeals ruled in *Sprague v. General Motors* ... that employers could alter or even terminate medical benefits for retired employees. Effective in 2003, the age of full eligibility for pension benefits was increased from 65 to 67 for all those born after 1960—that's in the United States. It goes on, "The Social Security Advisory Board has recommended increasing this age to 70.

"A recent Canadian Journal of Economics article indicates that the share of 65- to 69-year-olds working in the United States is now roughly double that in Canada." So, obviously, when you give people the freedom to work beyond 65 it seems to show, at least in the United States, that they are working.

"A recent survey of 174 large Canadian employers by Hewitt Associates indicates that 54% plan to reduce or eliminate retiree benefits in the next three years. A spokesperson for Hewitt states, 'Companies are starting to rethink the whole idea of post-retirement benefits'—apparently, that was in the *Globe and Mail* on 19 May 2004. "The Ontario Superior Court of Justice has agreed to hear a class-action suit ... composed of former civil service employees who claim that their retirement benefits have been unilaterally decreased by the province.

"Thus, as both the private and public sectors experience a financial squeeze due to the burgeoning costs of supporting the retired, pensions and benefits are potentially challenged. Advocates of mandatory retirement do not claim that its abolition will directly cause these retrenchments. However, they fear that individuals will eventually be left with no choice other than to work past 65."

As I said, so far, in jurisdictions in Canada that have abolished this, it seems that choice is prevailing, as the minister said, and that common sense is also prevailing and those who want to work past 65 continue to receive the benefits they would have received at age 65 that they earned and also have the added benefit, I would say, of working a few more years.

Under the last note here, "Other Potential Issues" that may be raised in this debate and which I know were raised in the consultations, "Will employers be able to release unproductive older workers without fear of discrimination lawsuits?" That's something that the government, in response today, should probably clear up. It's a terrible phrase, but in many companies, particularly the old manufacturing companies, they would keep the deadwood around until they got to retirement age. There was less fuss; it was kind and probably somewhat fair. The younger workers would carry some of the older workers for a couple of years until they actually hit retirement and received their pension benefits. We would hope, of course, that because there is no mandatory retirement any more, at least an age for mandatory

retirement, the companies wouldn't do that, that fairness would prevail and they wouldn't fire people prematurely because they know they're not going to naturally get rid of them at 65—or under the old law get rid of them at 65. That should be addressed, because I know that worries people.

1710

I come from a small-town area, where, certainly in small towns, even if people couldn't fully do the job because they weren't physically able any more, you kept them on, because they were your friends and neighbours, until they retired at age 65 and got their pensions. We hope we won't see firings of people earlier than that.

A good example would be in Mr. Arnott's Fergus area, where the Honourable Perrin Beatty's company, a family company—

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** GSW.

**Mr. Wilson:** Yes, GSW, white goods manufacturers.

**Interjection:** Beatty appliances.

**Mr. Wilson:** Beatty appliances and Beatty pumps. I worked for Perrin Beatty when he was Minister of National Defence, and continued to work for him when he was Minister of Health and Welfare, 1987-90. He often gave speeches on how—he was very proud that his grandfather kept the older—

**Mr. Leal:** He made a great stove.

**Mr. Wilson:** They made a great stove. You still see some of their products around, running decades later. The point is, they took great pride in carrying older workers until they would retire at 65. We want to make sure that people continue to be treated with dignity, even though we remove mandatory retirement.

Another potential issue being raised: Will employees face job loss at a younger age as employers attempt to avoid the charge of discrimination by releasing them before they reach 65? Would abolishing mandatory retirement address any potential skills shortages stemming from Canada's changing demographics? Those are some other issues that have been raised.

As soon as I find them, I just want to read some of the local newspaper clips, excerpts of what was said in my area when this bill was introduced—and actually, just before this bill was introduced. There was an editorial in the *Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin* on April 5, 2005, and it says:

"Our Future Brings Forth Challenges and Promise

"As the province mulls legislation aimed at repealing mandatory retirement practices, sighs of relief and groans of disappointment will be heard in equal measure. The sighs will be coming from employees closing in on age 65, particularly those without adequate pension plans who figure they need to continue working to stay afloat, especially since average salaries nationwide have hardly risen in two decades but costs of living have inflated considerably."

The editorial goes on to say, "Gasps will be largely coming from 20- and 30-somethings, who have had the carrot of retirees leaving behind stable, more lucrative



positions dangled in front of them ever since they left high school.

"A considerable number have toiled away in other fields or in less lucrative positions for years while clinging to the prospect of this impending 'job boom.'

"No one can fault Ontario residents who want to keep on working beyond 65—British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia are the only other provinces that impose a uniform mandatory age, with different employers making exceptions.

"Newfoundland and Quebec residents are also supposed to set retirement ages based on retirement or pension plans.

"The notion of working beyond 65 in places like Alberta and Manitoba is hardly a foreign concept.

"But as the legislation looms, there will likely be some bellyaching from the younger set over having the rug pulled out from under them once again.

"That grumbling will come with various economic predictions and statistics to prove their point.

"And, truly, the legislation, if passed, will have a ripple effect on areas ranging from spending on RRSPs to an increase on the brain drain as young workers get fed up with waiting for decent positions at home and look to ply their wares elsewhere.

"These problems are legitimate concerns in our society.

"But, of course, the impact of the new rules could be minimal, as the average age of retirement, and voluntary at that, is at about 62 nationwide anyway.

"The world is evolving at such a pace that we all have to keep up or be left behind. Medicine is making it possible for people who would have been infirm or even dead from disease a few decades ago, to be healthy and mobile and alert.

"Many seniors are seizing the opportunity offered by technology to work part-time from home or offer their years of experience to younger generations.

"And the same technology is allowing younger people to also work part-time from home and make a good living—if they have the education and skill set that is in demand.

"We could be on the brink of an exciting new age of work.

"It could mean a far more flexible future with the ability to work from our boats on Georgian Bay in the summer or from a chalet or ice hut in winter.

"Or not.

"It could be that the fallout from all of this will be negligible, as having the option of working beyond 65 doesn't necessarily mean everyone is going to be jumping at the chance."

That's from one of my local papers, the Collingwood Enterprise-Bulletin editorial.

The Alliston Herald, just around the time this bill was introduced, June 8, 2005, wrote the following, "Another Day." That's the title of this article.

"You load 16 tons and what do you get?

"Another day at it.

"Should Ontario become the fifth province to outlaw mandatory retirement at age 65? The proposed legislation is already being fiercely debated mere hours after it made headlines.

"Not surprisingly, labour unions and the New Democratic Party have come out strongly against the proposal.

"If the Liberal government gets the proposal through the Legislature, it could force people to work longer in order to qualify for retirement funds, according to critics.

"Both Ontario Federation of Labour president Wayne Samuelson and NDP critic Andrea Horwath said they fear allowing older people to work will encourage pension plans to increase the age at which people can receive funds—also set at age 65."

The Herald article goes on to say:

"Premier Dalton McGuinty said the legislation introduced yesterday would allow people to work as long as they wish.

"We just think it's wrong to discriminate against people on the basis of age,' McGuinty said. 'And we think it's right that people should have the option. Some people want to work past 65.'

"Mandatory retirement has already been lifted in Manitoba, Quebec, Alberta, Prince Edward Island, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

"The Liberals predict about 4,000 people a year in Ontario will choose to keep working past 65—0.06% of the 6.6 million people in Ontario's workforce.

"The truth of the matter is most of those who will take advantage of this legislation will be those working outside of demanding physical work—those in education, executives and the like.

"It's hard to imagine a coal miner still heading underground at the age of 70.

"What the province must do is ensure pension plans are not degraded by corporations looking to get a few more years out of employees.

"After all, it's one thing to choose to work beyond the age of 65, and it's quite another to have to."

The Barrie Examiner on April 21, 2004, a year before the legislation was introduced, made a point. They literally were ahead of themselves because the Conference Board of Canada made the same point in their report yesterday. The Barrie Examiner's headline is, "Economy Needs Seniors to Keep Working." It's a story surrounding comments that had been made by Bank of Canada Governor Dodge, who came out at that time and said he opposed mandatory retirement for economic reasons, for the good of the Canadian economy. So the CP story in the Examiner said:

"Canadians have outgrown mandatory retirement, a concept that should be laid to rest in many industries, Bank of Canada Governor David Dodge said Tuesday.

"As baby boomers age, swelling the ranks of senior citizens, many will be much more healthy than previous generations and want to continue working past age 65, said Dodge, who turns 61 this June." That was last year.

"That will have positive benefits for the economy, he added.

"I've felt very strongly that it's a silly policy (mandatory retirement). We don't have it in the federal government," he said.

"I think any organization is not terribly well served by it."

"He spoke after addressing the Senate banking committee on issues facing the economy, including a looming demographic bubble that will eventually see the ranks of senior citizens outnumber those of the working-age population."

As I said, the Conference Board pointed out that's only 40 years away. There are countries in the world—I believe Spain is one they mentioned; I may have the country wrong—where today the ratio of workers to retirees is one to one. We're heading there rather rapidly. As I said before, you're going to need people to keep working.

The article goes on to say:

"The federal government still leaves it up to companies to decide when their workers will retire but federal pension benefits kick in at 65"—regardless of whether you continue to work or not. You can have your pension and continue to work.

1720

"Late last year, Prime Minister Paul Martin—himself 65"—I think Mr. Miller mentioned he's 66 this year; makes sense—"kicked off a national debate on the issue by saying that Canadians should not be compelled to retire at that age."

I quote the Prime Minister. "I think that people should really be allowed to work as long as they want to work, and as long as they can make a contribution."

"Senators, Supreme Court of Canada judges and some civil servants have mandatory retirement rules.

"But some public opinion polls suggest a growing number of Canadians—although less than half of those surveyed—think such rules may be outdated. That's Dodge's view.

"I just don't think it makes a lot of sense," he said, particularly in white-collar jobs that tend to be more sedentary.

"Physical jobs, however, must be treated differently, Dodge added.

"Occupations that are physically dangerous, that's a different, other story. But some place like the Bank of Canada...."

"Dodge told the committee that moving away from mandatory retirement could present big opportunities for the country's economy."

A more contrary view comes from labour groups, and this particular article is from August 19 in the *Barrie Examiner*. It's another CP story, and it says, "Labour Groups Attack Retirement Plan." I thought I'd read out something from them.

"The Ontario government took its first steps Wednesday towards eliminating mandatory retirement at age 65, but labour leaders expressed doubts about whether the move would benefit the province's workers.

"The province will hold public consultations to determine the best way to eliminate the mandatory retirement age without jeopardizing the rights of older employees." That's what Chris Bentley said at the time.

"Ending mandatory retirement would protect workers by allowing them to decide when to retire based on their own lifestyles, circumstances and priorities."

"We want to achieve this goal without undermining existing retirement rights—including entitlements to benefit and pension plans—and also address any issues raised by business, labour or others."

"Wayne Samuelson, president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, said scrapping mandatory retirement would make it too easy for the province to push back the age at which workers can collect pension benefits.

"This does not give the employees the right to choose; it gives employers the right to choose who they are going to keep and who they are going to fire," Samuelson said.

"Rather than funding social services and funding pension plans so workers can afford (to retire), they'll just make it so that everyone just ends up working longer."

Of course, Sid Ryan—I think I already quoted from him, but to be fair, in the article:

"Sid Ryan, Ontario president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, said the aim of his union is not to encourage its members to work longer, but quite the opposite.

"Our whole objective is to get people out of the workforce as early as possible in life so they can enjoy their retirement, but do it with a decent pension plan and benefits," Ryan said."

If all the reports I'm hearing about this bill from the legal side are right, then Mr. Ryan shouldn't have too much to worry about. If they're not right, that's why we're sending this bill to committee to make sure we double-check all this, and the government has agreed that this bill will go to committee. So I hope those who are opposed will—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Wilson:** I'm sorry? Monday?

**Ms. Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** They're talking about something else.

**Mr. Wilson:** Oh, I thought the Liberal rump was trying to help me out in my rather boring remarks here. I'm glad you're awake over there anyway.

**Mr. Leal:** Simcoe Centre?

**Mr. Wilson:** Simcoe-Grey.

OK, last article for everyone who's still awake: June 18, 2005, *Barrie Examiner*. This one's not a CP story. It says, "Older Workers Have Lots to Give."

"Employers in Ontario are going to have to take a close look at their management policies as the government moves to alter mandatory government regulations. It will mean serious new challenges when it comes to handling an aging workforce.

"Experts in this field are advising employers to immediately establish a 'good performance management



style' and deal carefully with all stages of employer-employee relationships. This legislation means should an employer want to terminate an employee, he or she must be able to prove the job loss is not due to age discrimination. Under the mandatory retirement process, an employee who was let go at 65 could not raise a claim under the Ontario Human Rights Code by saying that he or she was being discriminated against because of age."

Remember, the Human Rights Code currently only covers people aged 18 to 65. You're protected then. You're not protected after then.

"Experts in employer-employee relations are advising that the new policy is a strong reason to introduce a solid, high-quality 'performance management' policy. The new legislation could mean it will be more expensive to retire or let go older workers than younger ones, and the new policy is going to require owners and managers to rethink how older employees are handled when it comes to retirement.

"Some employers have accepted for years the theory that older workers are not as productive as younger ones, but recent studies have shown that is just not true.

"A Research Management News study revealed that workers aged 65 to 75 perform as well, or better, than younger employees.

"The 2004 report also found that older workers can be retrained as easily as younger ones, and in fact want to keep building their skills.

"Many older workers are anxious to remain involved and have expertise in mentoring colleagues and can easily transfer knowledge.

"Over the years a great many opinions and myths have developed, says Research Management News, but they have been dispelled by recent studies. For example, work capacity and ability to perform do not decline with age. It is false that older workers lack retraining capability and the motivation to learn, and it is simply not true that everyone wants to, or should, retire at age 65 so they can enjoy their golden years. It is also false that older workers lose more time due to illness or injury.

"It is obvious this new legislation means employers must develop a clear, overall strategy to address transferring skills before retirement, make better use of senior employers"—I think it's supposed to say, "make better use of senior employees"—"and have a well-thought-out retirement policy.

"One survey showed that too many businesses let experienced staff retire with no transfer-of-knowledge plan in place.

"The simple truth is many companies can benefit greatly from workers 65 and older, and it makes no sense to force them to retire when they have much they can add to the business or industry."

That's the end of that article.

**Mr. Leal:** Will this help Honda?

**Mr. Wilson:** Will this help Honda? I'm going to have address that some other time and think about that one.

In the few minutes I have left, because we are talking about labour and jobs and the elimination of mandatory

retirement, I want to end on not too sour a note. We're having a terrible time in northern Ontario, as you know. There are 12 mills that are threatened with closing and various issues, everything from availability of raw materials to the allocation of wood and the high cost of energy, which I think is the main driver right now in northern Ontario.

As a former Minister of Northern Development and Mines and a former energy minister, I wanted to take a moment. I met today, as many of our colleagues did, with the United Steelworkers. I want to thank Joe Krmpotich and Sarah Konig for coming in to see me and Mr. Klees at the time.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wilson:** Well, you've only got a week here to respond, or maybe less. As you know, the government has been well warned, and the Steelworkers are doing a good job, as has the city of Kenora, of coming around and warning the government that Abitibi wants to close one of its two paper machines in that town. It will throw a lot of people, up to I believe 160 people, out of work. It could be the slippery slope that the rest of the Abitibi plant in Kenora closes. As I said, there are 11 other mills that I'm aware of where people might be losing their jobs.

We've lost over 500 jobs in Collingwood in the last few months, as about five businesses have left there. Alcoa, which makes aluminum wheels for companies like Honda, is located in Collingwood. It has written to the Premier recently. I had them in to see the energy ministry people, and hopefully Mr. Cordiano, the Minister of Economic Development, will meet with them soon, as he has promised. There are 420 jobs on the block in Collingwood right now, in addition to the over 500 we've lost.

A lot of this has to do with high energy prices, and I think the government's going to have to address it. You need a transition program for places with companies like Abitibi; you need a transition program for companies like Alcoa. I don't have the exact figures in front of me, but when I met with Alcoa about three weeks ago, their energy bill earlier this year used to be just over \$300,000 per month for electricity, and it's well over \$600,000. It jumped in one month. They can't absorb that. They're already very efficient; they've been doing everything they can to be more efficient. The union has been terrific in working with management, and the same with Abitibi in Kenora.

So while we're talking about jobs and mandatory retirement, I guess my point that ties this into this bill is that there are a lot of people who are going to lose their jobs pretty soon if the government doesn't get its electricity policy straightened out, and those people are going to have to work past 65. So the fear of unions that they won't get their benefits and pensions is not because of this bill here today; it's because of the economic policy of the government of Ontario, and particularly their energy policy. When the price of electricity got over eight cents per kilowatt hour, you should have started to

worry. We certainly started to worry, and we reacted by capping residential prices as prices started to peak at about 5.5 cents. I looked at the IMO Web site—I look at it every morning—and it has been 13.9 cents per kilowatt hour on a fairly steady basis. Your average for the year is still about 6.3. But with the peak in the summer it should be down now, and I don't know why prices are as high as they are on the spot market, the spot price. No company is going to survive in this province at 13.9-cent kilowatt hours. It's just not going to happen. So all of you who are listening, you're going to have to gang up on your new energy minister and your Premier and start responding.

1730

You gave \$500 million—this is the point I made to Alcoa during the meeting, and they agreed—to the auto sector. That helps the big companies, but then they continue to squeeze, in a Wal-Mart-like way, their suppliers like Alcoa. If Alcoa closes, they have lots of options in China to get their aluminum wheels. The fact of the matter is that you should have taken that \$500 million—your shortfall in electricity last year on the residential side was about \$247 million. You could have subsidized every residential customer and every industrial consumer and every business in the province with that \$500 million. You chose to put it in one sector and pick one winner over all the rest. That \$500 million would have given you a good transition program from capped prices to, eventually, spot market prices when supply comes on-line. You can't leave everybody to the dogs while you're building supply, which is going to take years. So I beg you, on behalf of the workers of this province, as labour critic and former energy minister, to get a transition program in place as part of your economic development strategy in this province. You can't just pick some sectors and leave everybody else to the whim of the spot market. You had the money; you've proven that. You've got a surplus—well, not a surplus. You ended up cutting your deficit; it's much lower than you thought it would be. You've obviously got a great deal of money. You've got the new health tax. You've got to start not picking just one sector over another, but having a proper program. If the goal is eventually market prices and “pay as you go” for electricity, you can't do that overnight. We learned that lesson the hard way. We took steps to correct it. You've done nothing since your time in office. Companies like Alcoa and Abitibi and many, many other mills in the north are pretty frustrated.

In fact, Alcoa has told the Premier in a letter that they're leaving—that's 420 jobs in Collingwood—if something isn't done very soon. It's frustrating for Abitibi up in the north, because they're only 25 kilometres or so from the Manitoba border, where they could get really cheap power, yet for some reason we're not allowing them to do that. I introduced and this Legislature passed the Energy Competition Act, 1998, which legally allows them to do it. They need the government to now sit down with them and work with them to run a line into Manitoba so they can get cheap power and work out those power agreements with our neighbours. The same

with mills on the other side of the province, the eastern side of the province. They're only a few kilometres away from Quebec. Quebec, of course, just this week announced a subsidy for all of its industries, and cheap power. I'd like you to look at that. I might be a free marketer, but after over 100 years of having people in a closed monopoly hydro system, you can't throw them into the free market overnight. You have to listen to the Alcoas and the Abitibis and the mills and have a sensible plan in place.

With that, I too would encourage members, as the minister did, to vote for Bill 211. I'm not sure if all of my colleagues are going to, and if there are any bugs in it—and I'm sure there are—that I haven't mentioned, hopefully we'll get those ironed out during the committee process.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Kormos:** The member for Simcoe—Grey has been pretty fair in his comments around the bill. He quoted Wayne Samuelson as often as he quoted some capitalist über-boss, and I commend him for that. Mr. Wilson's comments illustrate how cocky it is for the Minister of Labour to stand up and say somehow, “Anybody who doesn't support this bill is blocking the right of people around choice.” That may be his perspective, and he may not have had the opportunity as I did growing up in the 1950s to witness working people fight for a five-day work week and hear the attacks and criticisms made of them: “This will generate sloth, and we'll all go to hell in a handbasket if workers only have to work five days a week.” I witnessed those same people in the 1950s fight for earlier and earlier retirement ages, and again with the argument, “This cradle-to-grave mentality of support is going to turn us into a nation of losers.”

I grew up in the 1950s. You read things like Popular Science and Popular Mechanics magazines. They talked about—

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** You were nine when the 1950s were over.

**Mr. Kormos:** Yes. Life Magazine. As a kid, I read about how people were going to have to work less and not work as hard, and people were going to share—maybe it was the type of speakers that the Ukrainian Labour Temple was inclined to have. They were talking about building a world where people weren't identified by the work they do but rather by the people that they are.

**Ms. Wynne:** I want to comment on the comments of the member for Simcoe—Grey. I want to say I also grew up in the 1950s. I was eight when the 1950s were over.

I want to talk about this bill from a woman's perspective. I think that we have to be practical in terms of what the reality is for many women in the workplace. Many women took time out from formal work—I always object to “work,” that women who are at home looking after their children aren't working somehow. Like myself, they took time out of the workplace to look after our children, those of us who were privileged enough to be able to do that or who chose to do that.



When we come back into the workforce, we are at a serious disadvantage in terms of having accumulated equity, accumulated wealth, so we need that time to make up for those years when we were doing what I think is essential work—looking after the next generation. So I'm supporting this legislation wholeheartedly, because many of the people who have contacted me are from that group who took time out and need that time in the workplace.

I think the other thing we have to recognize is that people regulate themselves. I'm not going to be able to quote the source, and if anybody knows the source I'm happy to hear it, but I heard this quote at one point: "Nobody says on their deathbed, 'I wish I'd spent more time at the office.'" That's not what people say. People want to find time and ways to be with their families, to have a balanced life. People who need this legislation are people who need to work or people who choose to work. That's why we are doing the right thing in putting this legislation in place and ending mandatory retirement, so people will have a choice to do what they need or want to do.

**Mr. Arnott:** I'm pleased to have a chance to respond to the member for Simcoe-Grey and the comments he made this afternoon, speaking for one full hour with an incredible speech this evening—an incredible speech in duration, and certainly it was received with interest, I know, by all members of the House.

The member for Simcoe-Grey and I share the mutual distinction of having been born the very same week in early April 1963. Some of the members are talking about the era in which they grew up. Certainly, I would like to humbly predict to the House tonight that the member for Simcoe-Grey will still be the member for Simcoe-Grey when he turns 65. I'm certain I won't be here, but I'm equally certain that he may very well be, given the outstanding contribution that he makes to this House and his constituents.

About three and a half years ago, I was expected to do a private member's bill, as we all are who are on the ballot, and I was looking for an idea. I read in the Toronto Sun that the Human Rights Commissioner for the province of Ontario, Keith Norton, a former Conservative MPP for Kingston and The Islands, was recommending that we should end mandatory retirement. I actually talked to him at that time to get his advice and I considered bringing forward a private member's bill of that type at that time.

1740

Also, at the same time, I was informed that the international firefighters union was ramping up the pressure on double-hatter firefighters, and I elected to bring forward a private member's bill to support double-hatter firefighters instead of this issue.

But certainly I do support the principle of ending mandatory retirement. When our government was in office before the election of 2003, the Honourable Carl DeFaria, the Minister of Citizenship, brought forward a government bill which would have had the effect of ending mandatory retirement. I think most members of

the House support that principle, but obviously we would probably also agree that people should not be compelled to work after the age of 65 if they wish to retire, and that's an important principle.

I know that our caucus has a number of concerns that will be brought forward during the course of this debate and hopefully will be addressed at committee. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for listening to me.

**Ms. Martel:** I've always tended to view this debate from the point of view of pensions. Two points in this regard: When the government talks about choice and workers having a choice to continue to work, I say to the government, what about those workers who would like to have a choice to retire and can't because they don't have a pension in their workplace or because the pension that is in their workplace isn't adequate for them to retire on and have a decent standard of life in their senior years? We should be addressing that issue with many of the proposals that my colleague Andrea Horwath has put forward with respect to the need for every worker to have a pension, to be vested for a pension on the day they start to work, as they do in Quebec, to deal with a full range of issues around pensions so that people who work truly do have a choice about retiring because they know that their income is sustainable in their senior years.

This falls into place with respect to what Ms. Wynne has said in this regard: Why is it that we don't give value to work women do in the home raising children? Why is it that we do not afford women who do that a pension credit? Why are we not ensuring that there is pension eligibility for women who do that important work in the home? I don't think we should be looking at working longer as the way to resolve a situation for women who, like my mom, gave up a lot of pensionable time to raise four children. We should be valuing that work of raising children by ensuring we're doing something about having pensions for women, and for those men who stay at home looking after kids, to make sure that we are not playing catch-up because there was nothing in place for them for the time they did that important work. That should be the kind of debate we're having today.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Simcoe-Grey has two minutes in which to respond.

**Mr. Wilson:** I thank my colleagues from Niagara Centre, Don Valley West, Waterloo-Wellington and Nickel Belt; good points all around. Again, this bill will go to committee and we'll continue to make the points.

My mother, too, took 13 years out to have seven children. I should have sent her a public health brochure, because that must be pretty well a record.

**Ms. Martel:** Is she Catholic?

**Mr. Wilson:** Yes, she's Catholic, and very proud of it.

But then when I went to kindergarten, she went back the same year to continue teaching and I think ended up having to teach for 33 years. Frankly, Ms. Martel is quite right. My mother didn't have her bachelor of arts degree, because in those days you went to normal school, teachers' college, right out of high school. So she ended

up retiring, and her pension is \$23,000 a year. It's pathetic.

When I was going into the workforce and actually working here for a member years ago, people my age were then starting to teach and after three years they would make more than my mother made after 30 years, because the PhDs took over the teachers' unions and forgot about those teachers who only had normal school. But we're not bitter. She's a very nice person and she's never expressed any bitterness about it, but it was unfair and it goes to what Ms. Wynne and Ms. Martel said in terms of the unfairness to women who make sacrifices in the workforce. The laws and the rules didn't help them much back then and some areas have not improved since.

Having said that, I don't think mandatory retirement is going to be the end of the world for a lot of these pension plans and benefit plans. As long as you've earned them, according to this law and according to everyone I've talked to, you'll continue to receive those earned benefits and pensions at age 65 and now have the option to work beyond that, where you might not have otherwise had the option.

I thank all members for their participation and look forward to this bill going to committee.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Kormos:** New Democrats find this debate one of great concern. The language that's being used by the advocates for this bill, which talks about ending mandatory retirement and the suggestion that somehow there's law in this province that prohibits people from working after a certain age, is in and of itself a cause for concern because it has the effect of creating an illusion about what the real world is. The problem is that so many people beyond the age of 65 know full well that people 65 and older are working, and working hard. They're working at minimum wage jobs, they're working at demeaning jobs, and they're not doing it because it gives them meaning. They're doing it because they can't afford to live otherwise.

Ms. Martel, in her comments that were provoked by Ms. Wynne, and not inappropriately—look, I appreciate Ms. Wynne's comments, because she's bang on. But our response to that is just that, as Ms. Martel said, the debate, then, should be about how we attribute value, because surely there is incredible value in what a parent does, to be gender-neutral, but at the end of the day it's mostly women—has been—what women do raising kids, keeping families operating and functioning in the home.

It has always been troublesome when you talk to a couple and you talk to the husband and you say, "Well, you're retired now. What kind of work did you do?" Then you have to be careful, in my view, in saying to his wife, who's there with her kids and maybe her grandkids, "What kind of work did you do?" "What do you mean 'what kind of work' did I do? I worked damned hard, raising kids and taking care of a spouse's needs, maintaining a household and all those sorts of things."

So Ms. Martel is bang on, that the issue shouldn't be to make women work even longer so that they can

acquire pension credits but to understand that there is value which can be quantified monetarily in what a parent does working in the home doing parenting.

New Democrats wish that the debate—because, you see, I understand where Mr. Wilson and the Conservatives are coming from. It's no surprise. I'm not offended. I disagree very fundamentally, but it's no surprise.

But surely there are enlightened people in the Liberal caucus who are frustrated that the government has pursued this in such a narrow, indeed myopic way, because the whole issue about working and retiring and living out your senior years and functioning in your family and your community has surely got to be about more than just work. Let's face it, there's work and then there's work.

I put to all of you that here in this chamber we, as elected representatives, are about this small a chunk of the total population—and I've been blessed all of my adult working life, whether it was as a lawyer or here—that we're about this small a piece of the total working population where we actually enjoy our work—we do; I hope we do; I do—that our work is gratifying to us personally, that we are excited about the chance to do what we do on a daily basis. But come down to the steel mill, where you're walking along the catwalk around the arc furnace, the molten steel is flying and splashing, you've got the scars from 20 and 30 years of being burned by it and it's hot as Hades. And you're getting on because you're 50, 51, 52 and 53, and the joints aren't as supple as they were. You're not there because you love the smell of molten steel; you're there so you can take a paycheque home at the end of the week and try to pay off the second mortgage—not the second mortgage, but the second time you got a mortgage on your house to finance your kids to go to college and university. You are desperate for an exit point.

**1750**

One of the illustrations offered up by the parliamentary assistant in his comments was of a nurse. Good gosh, the Ontario Nurses' Association is ringing alarm bells because they've got a huge shortage of nurses. Nurses are getting the hell out of there as quickly as they can. They're leaving at the first opportunity. They're working in hard conditions, with the back injuries, the stress, the pressures and the ungrateful government that continues to knock you around.

I told you the other night about being out at the picket line with Mitech workers down on Major Street in Welland. There were 10 of them on a picket line, the Steelworkers' local. They've been out there for four weeks now. Finally a mediator has been appointed and there's hope of some progress, but the company, Mitech, and Brian Mitchell, are really digging in their heels, because they don't want to bring their unionized workers with them when they move the plant to a new location. They want to bust the union. People are making \$12 an hour, with 10 and 15 years' seniority, women and men, and as I said the other night as well, when you talk to



more than a few of them, you can hear the colourful lilt of their first language from the places where they came from to Canada.

They work at a plastic factory forming car parts, distributor caps and things like that, inhaling the fumes and being exposed to the toxicity and the inevitable joint and muscle injuries, called RSI, the repetitive strain injuries. They don't expect to live on a \$23,000-a-year pension, with all due respect to Mr. Wilson and his mother; their dream is to live on whatever it is, just enough to get by, because their bodies can't do it any more, never mind their souls.

Most of the world, most of the working people in this province, aren't like us. We're the smallest part of working women and men who have jobs that are clean and safe, other than the occasional paper cut, I suppose. I watch the cabinet ministers, and they all have the entourages with the bag carriers. They're not about to suffer any lower back strain. We're very fortunate. University professors are very fortunate with their tenure, when they acquire it. Dare I say it? Some of the other white-collar professions like lawyers are very fortunate. But the vast majority of working people aren't that fortunate. Working for them is not a vocation, as in a calling; it's a necessity. Where I come from, just like where you come from, Speaker, people don't have the oh-so-dilettantish choice of saying, "I think I'll work in this factory because the noise levels are a little lower than they are in that factory." No, you take whatever job you can get when you're 20 or 21 or 22, and then you fight to keep it, when you've got manufacturers shutting down because of globalization. First, with Brian Mulroney, it took their jobs down to the southern United States, and then with Jean Chrétien and the Liberals it took them to Mexico, and now it's taking them to China.

What a luxury, to talk about, "Oh, I'll work in this workplace rather than that one." Most workers don't have that option. You want to talk about choice, friends? Most workers don't have a choice about where they work or whether or not to work. Most workers don't have a choice about saying, "Oh, well, I think I'll call the legislative assistant this morning and explain that I won't be in until 9:30, because I was up late last night and maybe they can cancel that 9 a.m. appointment." It's true. You've got to be at that steel mill at 7 a.m. or 6:30 a.m., or at that construction site at 6 a.m., no matter how late you were up the night before, no matter how bad the cold is or the discomfort from the one beer too many you

drank the night before, no matter if you were up all night with a sick kid. You've got to be there. You don't say, "Oh, I think I'll call and have them cancel my 9 o'clock, because I'm tired this morning," or, "I've got to drop some dry cleaning off and, heck, they'll reschedule it for 9:30 and they won't miss me at caucus." It's true.

It's remarkable that we here, who are among—although we're not the wealthiest or the highest wage-earners, we're surely among the top 5% of income earners in the province. Most of us certainly make more than the average income in our constituencies, in our ridings, and a heck of a lot more than people working at Mitech have made for 10 and 15 and 20 years, making \$12 an hour. Twelve bucks an hour, and they're raising kids and they're buying homes, and they're doing darned good jobs, but man, they're sacrificing and they're doing it the hard way. They don't have credit cards. When you make 12 bucks an hour, you don't get credit. And they've got the most modest of pensions.

So it's with regret that this debate, disguised in the oh-so-misleading language of choice—when it really should be about values and how we value people and how we value them for who they are and the potential they have, not for the kind of work they do. I'm sorry, but I've seen the inscription, "Work shall make you free," and it doesn't conjure up attractive imagery or memories. I tell you that there is something wrong about a debate that suggests people should work longer and harder, that that will be a positive choice for them, when in fact too many people are already working too hard and too long for too little pay and for certainly no gratification.

You talk about a fundamental alienation of people by the exploitation of their labour. As I indicated, I'm of a generation growing up in the 1950s where we listened to leaders who talked about building a different kind of world, who talked about building a world where workers weren't exploited for their labour, who talked about a world where workers had a fair share of the wealth they create, who talked about how important it was that we build a world where people could retire sooner, rather than later, so they could do those things in their retirement years with sufficient health so that they could be productive in ways that a workplace could never let them.

**The Acting Speaker:** The time being 6 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 6:45.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 19 octobre 2005

### DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Système de prévention des attaques d'apoplexie M. Lalonde .....	165
---	-----

### PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2005 interdisant la discrimination des prix fondée sur le sexe, projet de loi 9, M. Berardinetti Adoptée.....	166
--	-----

### DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

Épreuves académiques M. Kennedy..... M. Klees..... M. Marchese.....	166 168 168
--	-------------------

### DEUXIÈME LECTURE

Loi de 2005 modifiant des lois pour éliminer la retraite obligatoire, projet de loi 211, M. Peters Débat présumé ajourné.....	201
---	-----

# CONTENTS

Wednesday 19 October 2005

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

<b>Library services</b>	
Mr. Murdoch.....	163
<b>Police services</b>	
Mr. Kormos .....	163
<b>Road safety</b>	
Mr. Dhillon .....	163
<b>Donald Warden</b>	
Mr. Wilson.....	164
<b>Hospice care</b>	
Ms. Mossop .....	164
<b>Queensway Carleton Hospital</b>	
Mr. Baird .....	164
<b>Run for the Cure</b>	
Mr. McNeely .....	164
<b>Health care</b>	
Mr. Zimmer .....	165
<b>Stroke care system</b>	
Mr. Lalonde .....	165

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

<b>Standing committee on government agencies</b>	
The Speaker .....	165
Report deemed adopted .....	165

## FIRST READINGS

<b>1376037 Ontario Inc. Act, 2005,</b>	
Bill Pr20, <i>Mr. Murdoch</i>	
Agreed to .....	166
<b>Gender-Based Price Discrimination Prohibition Act, 2005, Bill 9,</b>	
<i>Mr. Berardinetti</i>	
Agreed to .....	166
Mr. Berardinetti .....	166

## MOTIONS

<b>House sittings</b>	
Mr. Bradley.....	166
Agreed to .....	166

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

<b>Academic testing</b>	
Mr. Kennedy .....	166
Mr. Klees .....	168
Mr. Marchese .....	168

## ORAL QUESTIONS

<b>Health premiums</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	171
Mr. Duncan .....	171, 174
Mr. Hampton .....	174
<b>Greenbelt Foundation</b>	
Mr. Tory .....	172
Mr. Bradley .....	172
<b>Academic testing</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	173
Mr. Kennedy .....	173, 179
Mrs. Sandals.....	179
<b>Parole system</b>	
Mr. Dunlop.....	175
Mr. Kwinter.....	175
<b>Property taxation</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	175
Mr. Duncan .....	175
<b>Forest industry</b>	
Ms. Smith .....	176
Mr. Ramsay .....	176
<b>Hydro generation</b>	
Mr. Yakabuski.....	176
Mrs. Cansfield.....	177
<b>Electricity supply</b>	
Mr. Hampton .....	177
Mrs. Cansfield.....	177
<b>Crime prevention</b>	
Mr. Qaadri .....	177
Mr. Bryant.....	177
<b>Hospital funding</b>	
Mr. Martiniuk.....	178
Mr. Caplan .....	178
<b>Water quality</b>	
Ms. Churley.....	178
Mr. Wilkinson .....	179

## PETITIONS

<b>Health care</b>	
Mrs. Witmer .....	180
<b>Gasoline prices</b>	
Mr. Hudak .....	180
<b>GO Transit tunnel</b>	
Mr. Ruprecht .....	180
<b>Regional centres for the developmentally disabled</b>	
Mr. Wilson .....	180
<b>Physiotherapy services</b>	
Mrs. Witmer .....	181
<b>Chiropractic services</b>	
Mr. Hudak .....	181

## Volunteer firefighters

Mr. Wilson.....	181
<b>Autism treatment</b>	
Ms. Martel .....	181
<b>Property taxation</b>	
Mr. Ruprecht.....	182
<b>Highway 26</b>	
Mr. Wilson.....	182
<b>Frederick Banting homestead</b>	
Mr. Wilson.....	182
<b>School transportation</b>	
Mr. Wilson.....	182
<b>Cardiac care</b>	
Mrs. Munro .....	182

## SECOND READINGS

<b>Ending Mandatory Retirement Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, Bill 211, <i>Mr. Peters</i></b>	
Mr. Peters.....	183, 188
Mr. Flynn.....	186
Mrs. Munro .....	187
Mr. Kormos .....	187, 198, 200
Mr. Leal .....	188
Mr. Miller .....	188
Mr. Wilson.....	189, 199
Ms. Wynne.....	198
Mr. Arnott.....	199
Ms. Martel .....	199
Debate deemed adjourned.....	201

## OTHER BUSINESS

<b>Visitors</b>	
Mr. Colle.....	165
Mr. Peterson.....	169
Mr. Klees .....	171
<b>Legislative interns</b>	
The Speaker .....	165
<b>Elder Abuse Awareness Day</b>	
Mr. Bradley.....	169
Mr. Jackson.....	169
Ms. Martel .....	170

Continued overleaf





No. 6B

N° 6B

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 19 October 2005**

**Mercredi 19 octobre 2005**

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 19 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 19 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1845.*

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

#### DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 18, 2005, on the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Trinity–Spadina.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina):** Thank you, Speaker. I've got another 15 minutes.

I just wanted to welcome the citizens and the taxpayers who are watching this political program. We are all live. It's a quarter to 7. Good to be back, and good to have this opportunity to directly speak to the citizens of Ontario.

Just to encapsulate and do a brief review of what the member for Brant was saying yesterday, because he was delivering an attack on the Conservative Party, he said that the Conservative Party has a penchant or a predilection for privatization in the areas of health care and/or other areas. I couldn't help but be amused, because he made it appear as if only Tories have that predilection to give away taxpayers' pecunia to the private sector.

But the Liberals—ah, the Liberals are good at it too. They love to give my money and your money—what I call “pecunia”—away to the private sector more quickly than you can say “pecunia.” It's gone to the private sector, and they're doing it with everything, because our new minister—not new. The minister of infrastructure has promised to spend billions of dollars and give it away to the private sector with the claim that he is being innovative and someone who uses the taxpayers' money wisely.

When he used to attack the Tories for engaging in the P3s, private-public partnerships, they said, through McGuinty, that they would never, ever do the same. In opposition they said this. They get into government and no sooner do they take hold of that limousine than the tune changes. It's no longer private-public partnerships; it is now called “alternative financing procurement.” You see, merely changing the name allows the Liberals to say, “Ah, ah, ah, it's different. Private-public partnerships are private stuff that the Tories were engaged in, but alternative financing procurement is not the same; it's

different. It's not about giving your money away to the private sector. It's a Liberal innovative thing.” But it's all the same. Incomprehensible as the name might appear to you, it's the same blah, blah, blah: private-public partnership, alternative financing procurement. Tory P3s, Liberal alternative financing procurement: It's all the same blah, blah with a different name. It's all about giving our money to the private sector so that they can build hospitals, so that they can build schools.

In essence, when you involve—I say to you, good doctor, my friend who used to be here, that when you let them build, in order for them to make a profit it means you are taking public dollars away from what should be going into our health care system, away from what should be going into our educational system and giving the private sector the pecunia they so desperately want and need, and we're giving it away. We're paying for it.

I want to say to the public watching that the Liberals are no different in this matter. They want to adopt a new mechanism of financing hospitals or educational systems or sewers so that it doesn't show up in their books as a debt which produces a deficit. That's what this game is all about. It's a political game of hiding money away from the books, onto a different ledger, and it doesn't show up in the books as a problem for the government. That's the political gain. They're just too embarrassed to say it. Because they can't be clear and transparent with the public, they have to invent new terminology such as “alternative financing procurement.” It makes a mockery of politics. It makes so many people become cynical with the political process. I expose it so that people know—not to become cynical, but to attack Liberals as ferociously as we used to attack the Tories.

1850

Moving on. The government says of their throne speech—one of the most boring of speeches that I have ever heard in this Legislature; Olympic in nature in terms of being boring. They had only one new idea, and they were so proud of this new idea. The new idea is a plan to guarantee that on-line applications for birth certificates will be processed and delivered within 15 business days or the applicant gets his or her money back, \$25 for the original and \$45 for a copy. It's the only bold idea the Liberals could come up with. It's almost embarrassing that they should put that in a throne speech.

Let me tell you what I know about this, because I have a strong suspicion that most MPPs don't have a clue what this is all about, but I could be wrong. I'm willing to give the benefit of the doubt to some MPPs. I found out in the course of my long work on this issue that it has taken us

anywhere from six months to a year to get a birth certificate, in spite of our involvement in the case, whatever case we were dealing with. After a great deal of political pushing, the government gave the MPPs a little more leverage when we call to expedite. "Expedition" doesn't mean that it was done in two or three or four weeks. No, no, I say to you. "Expedition" of the case meant that it still took many, many months to get that birth certificate. In spite of the pressure we have put on this government, it still takes a long time for birth certificates to get to people's homes.

Lo and behold, one day about two months ago my daughter said, "Dad, I applied on-line, and I was able to get the certificate in a week's time." I couldn't believe it, I say to the Liberals behind me, because I didn't know such a thing existed. I didn't know as an MPP. I suspect 99% of the MPPs here didn't even know that this can happen except when they heard it in the throne speech. When I discovered this, I said, "We've got to get on to this. We've got to let the people know, those who have computers, those who have Internet services; we've got to let them know that they can get it within a week." It was an amazing, bold announcement this government made: that if you apply on-line, you can get it in two weeks or your money back. Isn't it amazing that they gave a guarantee? They give a guarantee on something they know they can deliver on. Why wouldn't this government, liberal as you are, give a guarantee to the other poor folk who don't have a computer, who don't know how to operate it, who don't have the Internet? Why don't we give those people the same guarantee that they will get the birth certificate—

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** They just have to go to your office.

**Mr. Marchese:** Non, non, je vous dis non. Cela ne marche pas comme ça.

**Mr. Lalonde:** That's what they do when—  
*Interjection.*

**Mr. Marchese:** No, no. I say to you boys, I am not sure you are familiar with this issue at all—

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** Who are you calling "boy"?

**Mr. Marchese:** All of the boys on the other side, which includes the Minister of Citizenship. I say to him and the others who are here—a couple there, a couple here—that we have got to give a guarantee. We have to give a guarantee to those who don't have a computer, that they be given the same guarantee that they can get their birth certificates in two weeks. I expect every Liberal here—Mr. Duguid from Scarborough Centre is right here. I want him to lobby his minister and his government so that when that person who cannot go on-line applies for a birth certificate, they can have a guarantee that they can get it in two weeks. Do we have your pledge to do that?

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** They can go to my office and use my computer.

**Mr. Marchese:** We have no pledge.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I remind the members, when they decide that I'm not part of this conversation, I'll leave and you two can carry on.

**Mr. Marchese:** No, please, we need you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** OK.

**Mr. Marchese:** Speaker, remember, I'm just trying to be interactive, but we need you.

So here's the beautiful, bold initiative. The government says, "You've got a guarantee that if you apply on-line, you get it or your money back." But the other guys and women who apply to get their birth certificate in the traditional way, they've got no guarantee. They're still going to line up. They've still got to wait for six months. They have to wait for a year. See, it makes for cynical politics. We make fun of politics when we introduce such things in this place. I wouldn't be proud of that.

Moving on, there's so much to say on education, because, you see, education is the biggest thing the Liberals have done in a whole long time in this place. Today we had an announcement from the minister. Speaking about the standardized tests, the government said, "We will have 75% of Ontario students who will reach the provincial standard." It was 54%. So you say to yourself, how could they do that? Think about this, John. To be able to get students from 54% on the standardized test and move them to a standard of 75%, it's a big deal. You just don't move a body of people to that standard without a whole lot of work in the school and outside of the school to be able to get people ready.

**Mr. John O'Toole (Durham):** So how do they do it?

**Mr. Marchese:** How do they do it? I know how they're doing it, and how they did it, in spite of the denials of the Minister of Education. They have done three, four, five little things that make a difference, and the minister denies it. In fact, he says it's a conspiracy theory. I love that one. He calls what I'm about to say "conspiracy theory." I love it.

Let me tell you what he's done. Students in the past had a limited time to answer questions under the old regime. I'm repeating—"old regime," "the past"—but repetition sometimes is OK. This year's instructions to the test administrator state that "students may take the time they need to complete the section, as long as it is in one continuous sitting." Speaker, you know what that means. If you're writing a test and take six hours, students are now allowed to take eight hours, 10 hours or more to complete that test. It was never done before. That means students are able to do something today that they couldn't do before in terms of improving the overall mark.

Secondly, the test is half as long. Whereas it was 10 hours last year, it's now six hours this year. The minister made this announcement. He declared that the tests would be half as long—not the EQAO, but the minister. Remember, the EQAO is supposed to be independent, somewhat independent, but the minister declared that part of the change in the test.

Third, students are allowed to use calculators. The minister had some backbencher ask a question today in the final wee hours of question period to simply declare



that Marchese and the leader of the NDP had it all wrong, that they did use calculators before. I couldn't believe that he got a backbencher to ask a question on that when he's clearly wrong and could not contest the other two things that I raised. I tell you this: Using calculators in grades 3 and 6 is new this time around. You could not use calculators before, and they did not use them, in spite of the denials of your buddy.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Shame. Ban the calculators.

**1900**

**Mr. Marchese:** Shame. This guy is so bold and bald in his statements. I'm telling you, he thinks he can get away with whatever he says.

Fourth, the test is simpler. There are many more multiple choice questions this time around than there were in the past.

Five, teachers are encouraged to mark up, not down.

I say this and the minister says it's a conspiracy theory. I couldn't believe it. Then he argues, "Oh no, we have an incredible amount of expertise. We have authorities involved in this. Oh no, NDP MPP Marchese has got it all wrong." I've got to tell you—

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The Calculator Conspiracy.

**Mr. Marchese:** The calculator experience?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** The title of your new book is *The Calculator Conspiracy*.

**Mr. Marchese:** Very good, my colleague the Minister of Citizenship: *The Calculator Conspiracy*. This is the signature piece of this government.

There's so much more I wanted to talk about: special ed, capital projects and physical education, where only 30% of our classrooms have physical education teachers. Your minister's worried about obesity, and 70% of our classrooms do not have physical education teachers. We're going to get teachers trained with one-time money to do a couple of exercises in the classroom. What we need are physical education teachers, what we need are librarians who contribute to the literacy of our kids, and we don't have them.

There's a slow decline, even under the Liberals. And your glory is going to be what you've done for education? I tell you, that's nothing to brag about. The way to improve our education system is to make sure we put the resources in place that I have mentioned. That would bring about improvements, not the fake numbers that have been introduced by this government.

I will have a lot more to say as time goes on. Please stay tuned.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** In these two minutes I'd just like to make some brief comments with regard to the presentation made by the member from Trinity-Spadina, my friend Mr. Marchese. As far as people having access to computers for their birth certificate applications, they can go to a constituency office. This was brought up by my friend from Scarborough Centre, Mr. Brad Duguid, who mentioned earlier that if a constituent does not have a computer and wants to apply on-line, they're welcome to go to an

MPP's office and ask the MPP or the MPP's staff to submit the application. We all have computers in our offices and the applications can be done that way. So that's how you solve that problem.

There's a lot more that can be said to address all the remarks made by the member from Trinity-Spadina, but I just wanted to say in this remaining minute or so that our government has set a path that started two years ago in early October, and we are continuing along that pathway. We're not going to deviate from it or react every time someone wants something different done.

We inherited a huge deficit of \$5.6 billion. It has been reported now that it's been reduced. Ontarians have worked together and we've reduced the provincial deficit from \$5.6 billion down to \$1.6 billion. These are audited numbers. So we're well on course to getting out of the financial mess that we inherited.

We're also working on the two key things that we planned to do when we ran for office, which were to create a better health care system and a better education system. We're seeing it every day. In fact, today in question period, both the education minister and the health minister were asked questions and made statements regarding their ministries. We are seeing improvements in both of those areas: better scores in the schools; shorter waiting times and more services available for those who need them in long-term care and our hospitals. So we're well on course and we've got two more years to make the province even better, healthier and stronger.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments? The member has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Marchese:** The member from Scarborough Southwest says, "Well, if you don't have a computer, I've got a solution: Come to the MPP's office; we've got computers," and it's done. That's it. That's not a solution.

The solution is to give a guarantee to whoever applies by whatever means for a birth certificate of getting that birth certificate within two weeks, and it doesn't matter how you apply. The member from Scarborough Southwest says, "Not a problemo. You come to my office and you get it solved." I've got to tell you, it assumes that the guy who comes to your office will either know how to use a computer or it assumes that people will know that all they have to do is go to their MPP's office versus people going through the traditional means of getting it. It just doesn't work that way. You've got it all wrong.

Your defence of this innovation is inadequate, in my humble view, and you've got a whole lot more to think about in terms of how you respond to that because you're not going to be able to do a good job of explaining that to your electorate.

With respect to the second part of his remarks, saying, "We're improving health and education," clearly he didn't hear my remarks.

**Mr. Berardinetti:** I did.

**Mr. Marchese:** If you did, member from Scarborough Southwest, you wouldn't be saying that. You have no good record when it comes to special ed. People have not received any extra funding. You've got no good record

on librarians. We've seen cuts under your government. You've got no good record on ESL. You have no good record on getting physical education teachers or music teachers in our schools. You don't have a record to be proud of, and all of this will be evidenced with time. We are exposing that myth, and doing it very well.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Duguid:** I want to begin by saying to any of my constituents out there who have been calling in over the last couple of weeks since this session began: No, I have not joined the NDP. A lot of people see us in these seats. We've shifted our seats in this place, and I happen to be here beside my good friend from Trinity-Spadina, who is with the NDP. The line is drawn here, so these are the Liberals in this section. When some of these guys speak, it looks like we're behind them because of the camera angle. We may be behind them physically, but for much of what they're saying, we're not behind them at all. So I want to make it very clear now to all of my constituents that I have not, nor will I ever, cross the floor to the NDP, or to the Tories for that matter. I'm very proud to be working in the McGuinty government and working as a Liberal, and I'm proud of the throne speech that was delivered about a week or so ago here in this place.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** A dynamic speech.

**Mr. Duguid:** It was a dynamic speech. A throne speech is a time to assess where we've been and determine where we want to go from here. We're halfway through our mandate now. It's been 24 months and an incredible amount of activity, I'm proud to say, has happened in this province. In fact, I would say the face of this province has virtually changed in 24 quick and short months. There has been an incredible amount of progress made.

At this time, I think back to what we inherited when we came to office two years ago: a health care system that was failing, a health care system with a shortage of doctors and nurses, with labour strife throughout and long waiting lists for procedures. Worse than that, this system, as our health care minister is wont to say quite often, was really not a health care system at all; it was a system that was built in silos, with people going in different directions.

Perhaps worse than all of that, it was a health care system that wasn't at all sustainable going into the future, a system that was going to require investments of new billions of dollars each and every year, something that the people of this province simply could not afford for any extended period of time, let alone a year or two. So something had to be done to fix up that health care system. We'll get to that in a second, because I want to talk about something else we inherited.

We inherited an education system with declining test scores, an education system with a rising dropout rate, where young people were dropping out at alarming rates, giving up on their education and going into probably what would end up being low-end jobs, and not fulfilling their destinies, not fulfilling their potential. We inherited an education system rife with labour unrest, with teachers striking, with employees in their schools going off on

strike, with a record number of lost school days, something that was really impacting the quality in the classrooms and our ability to teach our young people.

**1910**

We inherited crumbling schools, schools that were allowed to deteriorate for over a decade with that lack of investment, schools that, frankly—I don't want to call them Third World schools, but there are some who would suggest that they were in bad shape and that they could almost be comparable to them. In fact, some would suggest that many Third World countries had schools that were superior in their physical status to our schools.

Then we look at the post-secondary education system in the province: 10th out of 10 in funding per capita for post-secondary education, something none of us should have been proud of back then and the previous government, frankly, should have been ashamed of. A skyrocketing tuition rate impacted the ability of young people to access post-secondary education and fulfill their potential.

We've all heard about it and we don't want to dwell on it too much more, but the fact is, we inherited a \$5.6-billion deficit which made our ability to tackle these challenges all the more difficult. But what did we do? Did we put down our heads and say, "Let's try to shuffle this deficit away," or try to hide it like the previous government did? No, we didn't do that. Did we run up a big, booming deficit and just spend, spend, spend on the things we felt we needed to spend on without paying any attention, like the NDP did when they came to office originally? No, absolutely not. Did we abandon our objective to improve public policy? I would say absolutely not. In fact, we are more committed now than we've ever been to ensuring that the commitments we've made to improve public policy and public programs throughout this province are met.

We faced up to this challenge. We made some tough decisions early in our mandate that are allowing us to invest in those areas that are very, very important to each and every Ontarian, crucial—not just important, but crucial—to the future prosperity of this province. In a short 24 months, as I said, we've changed the very face of this province. We've changed the priorities that the previous government had to the people's priorities, the priority of improved health care, the priority of improved education—primary, secondary and post-secondary. At the same time, we've tackled the deficit problem that we inherited.

We look at the waiting list problem that we inherited. We've invested heavily in ensuring that those waiting lists have come down. We're seeing more cancer care treatments, we're seeing more access to cardiac surgeries, we're seeing more access to cataract surgeries, we're seeing more access to MRIs and CT scans, we're seeing more hip and joint replacements. These are material improvements that people are experiencing in their health care system, and I know my constituents are experiencing them and they're appreciating the efforts that are being made.



Our family health teams are now being brought into action, because there was a shortage of doctors that was simply not being dealt with under the previous government. We're tackling that in part through our family health teams and people are gaining access to primary care throughout the province, something that's extremely important.

We're investing in our hospitals. In my area alone, Scarborough Hospital has been crying for years about the desperate need to improve their 50-year-old emergency services. Here's a hospital that sees more ambulances than any hospital in this city, probably more than any in the country, and it was operating in conditions that were 50 years old. We've invested \$30 million in a critical care and emergency wing improvements program that is going to make great strides in terms of improving the quality of care in that part of our city of Toronto, in Scarborough.

We're investing in community-based care versus institutional care—extremely important as we try to move that transition of the health care system over. We're creating local integration networks, and I don't have time today to go into what that is, but what this is, frankly, is breaking down the silos that existed in the previous lack of a system in health care that we inherited. In fact, we've brought greater labour peace to the health care industry with agreements with doctors and nurses.

We're making Ontarians healthier as well: less junk food in schools, prevention of smoking, attacking obesity in children, mandatory physical education programs. All of these things are going to make a great impact on our ability to improve the health care system and health in general for Ontarians.

In the education area, let's look at the fact that we've got labour peace now for the next four years. That makes a big difference. Teachers can now concentrate on teaching in their classrooms and not worry about having to man the barricades and worry about the labour strife that we inherited under the previous government.

Smaller class sizes in the early grades are ensuring that our young people get the attention that they need and deserve. Lead teachers in literacy and numeracy are ensuring that our young people are getting a better education and better skills in these areas, and the test scores are already proving results in that.

Hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in our schools. Our crumbling schools are no longer crumbling; we're fixing them up bit by bit. I was in Churchill Collegiate in my riding not long ago—just a couple of weeks ago—

**Interjection:** What's it like, Brad?

**Mr. Duguid:** Well, I'll tell you, it was a mess before. The boiler rooms were just about broken down. There were safety issues. We've had to invest millions of dollars in those boilers—not a sexy thing to invest in, but at least when those young people are going to that school now, they're going to have a climate and an environment that they'll be able to effectively learn in, which would not have been the case without that investment.

We're improving test scores throughout the system. It's extremely important to the future of our province. We're investing \$6.2 billion in post-secondary education in the institutions themselves, to ensure that they're keeping pace with post-secondary institutions around the world but, just as importantly, in the people, the very young people who attend those institutions, in providing grants for the first time in at least a decade for young people to attend universities and colleges to ensure that they get the education they deserve, to ensure that they can become the best they can be.

These are important things to invest in for the individuals who benefit from these programs, but they're important for all of us, because if we are to meet our objective of having the most educated and skilled workforce on the planet—and that is our objective—we're going to be able to do that only if we have the best post-secondary system and the best education system in the world.

Mr. Speaker, as my time runs out, I thank you for this opportunity to respond to the throne speech. I'm sharing the rest of my time with the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, and I look forward to hearing her comments.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** I'm certainly happy to be able to add my comments to the debate on the throne speech.

I should mention to the member from Trinity-Spadina that there are more than guys over on this side. I don't know if I sit in the corner and that's an issue.

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** That's generic that he loves you.

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** Oh, yeah, right, or maybe it's just my occupation before I got here that makes him think I should be of the other gender.

Anyway, I want to comment on some of the things that have been said about agriculture and its role in the throne speech. I've heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about there being nothing for agriculture in the throne speech. I've heard other members of the opposition qualify that by saying it was virtually ignored, and I've seen comments in the press. As a first-term MPP, it kind of tweaked my curiosity, and so I decided I would do a little research.

First of all, I have to say thank you to my staff and to the legislative library staff for the role that they played in this. I asked them to search out the past decade of throne speeches. We actually have a total of nine throne speeches that were given in the past 10 years. I started in 1995, and in 1995's throne speech there is exactly one sentence dedicated to agriculture.

It got the same sort of notice in 1998. In that throne speech it says, "Agriculture and food industries leading the nation in farm cash receipts and value-added food production." It doesn't say anything about what the government will do for agriculture; it just gives us a little bit of a fact.

Then in 1999 and the following one in 2001, there is no mention of agriculture whatsoever. It doesn't even appear in the throne speech at all.

As a farmer, over the years I have certainly paid a lot of attention to the prominence of agriculture in the throne speech and in the government of the day, and I know that a lot of my own constituents have done the same thing. There are certain key words that farmers look for when they're listening to throne speeches, and one of them is "farm income." It's a very important phrase to those of us who make our living in agriculture. The throne speech that was delivered by our government a week ago addresses the government's priorities for agriculture and farming. In that throne speech we talk about innovation, marketing and farm income.

#### 1920

I want to read into the record the comments made by Paul Misteale, who is the vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. For the record, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture is the largest general farm organization in this province, with a membership of 40,000 farms, farm business registry of registered farms in this province. From his comments to the membership of the Ontario federation, I'm going to read the following: "The Ontario government's speech from the throne contained a number of encouraging indicators for Ontario agriculture."

He goes on to say, "It was good news to hear our Lieutenant Governor give details of the government's focus on three priorities for agriculture—innovation to support research and development; marketing Ontario food as the government works with the industry to develop a new branding and marketing strategy; and improved farm income through a joint effort with OFA and our commodity partners to improve our system of safety nets."

He also goes on to acknowledge that, "The speech referred to 'massive agricultural subsidies in Europe and the US hurting our farmers and making it difficult for them to compete.'"

"This is a clear indication the McGuinty government understands what's behind our calls for new risk management and production insurance programs for Ontario agriculture."

At the end of his comments, he says, "OFA is encouraged by the speech from the throne and looks forward to working with the government to meet Ontario agriculture's needs for the future."

As a farmer, I can honestly say that is about as encouraged as the farm community has ever been with a throne speech, certainly within the last decade. We have very much looked forward to comments and recognition by the government on issues around farm income and the impact of the global markets on that income.

He also talks about—and we mention in the throne speech—the marketing. The marketing includes things such as the Foodland Ontario branding program, which was started in 1977 but continues to evolve to meet the demands of the day. We also talked about things such as innovation, and Mr. Misteale speaks to innovation. We

know that we need innovation in the field of agriculture if we are going to be able to respond to global markets, and more importantly, to consumer demand.

Agriculture is an evolving business. We know that our food is safe, plentiful and nutritious, but we need to market those qualities. That is where the marketing issue and the innovation will come in. We need that kind of thing to happen so that our consumers demand Ontario agriculture; so that they go to the grocery store and say to the managers and the buyers there, "We want Ontario products."

Currently, the farm community is involved in a campaign called Farmers Feed Cities! Farmers Feed Cities! calls upon the government to play a role, but it also calls upon consumers to play a role. We need, as consumers, to be conscious of the fact that our food comes from the farmers in rural Ontario. As a government, we recognize and acknowledge the difficulties that are currently experienced by some sectors in agriculture. The grains and oilseeds farmers are currently experiencing great difficulties in pricing and commodities. Our government is acknowledging that. We want to work with them and our federal counterparts to address those issues.

There are also issues such as supply management, which my husband and I are involved in. We are going to the world trade talks soon, and we need the support of both levels of government, federal and provincial, to make sure we sustain that sector of agriculture. Supply management has been very successful in this province and in this country, and it has provided a great income for those farmers who enjoy that. But not all farmers have the advantage of being in supply management and not all farmers want to be in supply management. Many of them indulge in such things as grains and oilseeds or they work in the livestock industries, which have experienced great difficulty, especially the beef industry which is just overcoming the BSE crisis that we've experienced for the past two years.

For the farm community, this throne speech has been very encouraging. We enjoy the support of our farmers when we go forward to help address those issues that they know are critical to their success and to the long-term sustainability of agriculture in this province.

#### **The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Prue:** If no one else wants to comment, I think I have just heard two very erudite speeches. I don't necessarily agree with what you have to say. I do have to tell you—and I will be speaking to this myself tonight—that that was one of the most boring throne speeches in the history of this House. It was pretty bad. You only had to look at the Toronto Star cartoon a couple of days later, with the poor Premier standing there winning the award for boredom. I have to tell you, there was nothing much new. There were only two new things said in all of that throne speech. I had to sit there and wonder, "How good is this?"

There was one that some people would welcome, although I'm a little bit tentative about whether it's a good thing, and that had to do with the grade 12 diploma. I understand why it's being done: because we have so



many failures because they've ratcheted up the system. We have so many people who have difficulty passing that they're giving them an alternate and hopefully similar certificate at the end, so they can say they have completed high school. And you should, because there are many skills and abilities that are not necessarily related to reading and writing.

The second one, which was actually new in the throne speech, I thought was one of the most bizarre things I have ever heard in my life. The rest was all, "Rah, rah, what a great job we're doing." If you believe it, you believe it; most of us don't. The second thing was about birth certificates, which I really thought was kind of funny. You have a birth certificate system where people wait for months and years to get a certificate, but if you're really savvy and smart, if you know how to use a computer and you know how to handle it right down to the nth degree, there is now a money-back guarantee. But I will tell you, if you live in northern Ontario, if it's difficult and you don't have a computer, all of that's impossible.

I'll speak some more when I get my 20 minutes.

**M. Lalonde:** C'est avec plaisir que je dois répondre au député de Trinity-Spadina.

Je dois dire, lorsqu'il a fait référence aux certificats de naissance, je crois qu'il y a un travail à faire à l'intérieur de son bureau. C'est vrai que dans le discours du trône nous avons dit que maintenant il sera plus facile d'obtenir un certificat de naissance, mais ce sera directement lorsqu'on applique par l'ordinateur. Mais nos bureaux sont ouverts à tous les jours, j'espère, de 8 h 30 à 5 h, pour répondre aux besoins des personnes qui n'ont pas accès à un ordinateur.

Laissez-moi vous dire que c'est vrai que nous avons promis 15 jours. Par la fin du décembre prochain, nous devrons avoir le système en place. Mais pourquoi est-ce que, dans le passé et encore aujourd'hui, nous prenons jusqu'à six mois pour obtenir un certificat de naissance? C'est que l'ancien gouvernement nous a laissé avec un groupe d'employés qui n'avaient pas des emplois à plein temps. Aujourd'hui, nous avons procédé avec l'emploi à plein temps pour au moins 125 personnes additionnelles. Ces personnes-là étaient à temps partiel auparavant, donc, à chaque année il fallait recommencer à former les personnes et leur donner l'information nécessaire.

Mais le gouvernement McGuinty a livré un discours du trône, un des meilleurs que nous avons eus depuis peut-être 40 ans.

Nous allons répondre immédiatement aux besoins scolaires, et puis, cela le démontre aujourd'hui même, lorsque le ministre de l'Éducation a fait le rapport. Je suis fier de dire que les résultats des écoles françaises ont vraiment augmenté. Si je regarde dans la lecture, nous avons atteint un pointage de 67 %. Nous regardons dans les mathématiques: 74 %; en écriture, 70 %.

Donc, nous avons fait des progrès et nous avons investi dans—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** I was not able to sit here in person and listen to the comments made by the honourable members, but I was in my office doing some work and listening to what they had to say.

Interestingly enough, although I respect them very much, unfortunately, my perspective is that this throne speech didn't say very much at all to the people of Ontario. It's a very sad day when the people of Ontario's expectations are built up during a provincial election campaign. Two years into the mandate of the government, people expected some kind of signal that some of those expectations would in fact be realized at some point during the mandate of this government, but lo and behold, the government prorogues the House, comes back with a throne speech and it's a big letdown. Nothing was said of any significance so that any of the people of Ontario could say, "Oh, right. I remember now. That's why we voted for the Liberals in the first place."

Unfortunately, the Liberal government squandered the opportunity to reassure the people of Ontario that they actually do have something to offer, that they actually do have something to provide, that they actually are going to make a difference and make a change for the people of Ontario. Unfortunately, that wasn't done. Instead, what we got was a rehashing of the old promises, a restating of some of the old directions, many of which, I have to say, the opposition parties are blowing huge holes through day after day in this very chamber with not too much effort. Quite frankly, as all of us will recognize, the many promises, the many pieces of a platform that the Liberals had when they were running for election have simply disappeared into the horizon. The fact of the matter is, the people of Ontario are not so gullible to imagine that the restating of this vision, the restating of this dismal failure halfway through their mandate is going to make any iota of difference to the reality they face in Ontario.

**Mr. Phil McNeely (Ottawa-Orléans):** I think the voters of Ontario know what they got in the first two years and know what they will get in the next two years. The speech from the throne was just laying out more of the path that we're going on.

I'd like to address the gas tax for the city of Ottawa. At the end of 2007, \$40 million is to be given every year, which will help them with their budgeting. There's \$200 million for public transit in Ottawa.

I've talked to the teachers, and they're saying, "We have more resources and the schools are really going well." The teachers are happy. They're proud of their profession. They're in agreement. The parents are together, the boards are together, the government is together with the teachers, and it's doing a great job for the kids.

I really want to talk about health care, because the Harris-Baird team, as I like to call it, left Ottawa 14th out of 14 in wait times, the longest wait times in this province. I just want to go through some of the things our government is doing in Ottawa. A recent investment in the Montfort Hospital of \$125 million will create 81 new bed spaces, with operating rooms. The Queensway Carleton has an expansion in their emergency services,

the ICU and the geriatric unit. The Ottawa Regional Cancer Centre has \$6.6 million for more linear accelerators—new equipment that's badly needed. Rogers House is the first community support that we have for children dying from cancer, and our government is picking up 90% of the operating costs of that. The civic site at the Ottawa Hospital is expanding its emergency department, from 55,000 patients to eventually 75,000 patients, and the University of Ottawa medical school is getting new work for research. All of these things are happening. We've taken MRIs, where we were the worst in the province—almost a year for an MRI. There are now 14,000 more MRIs per year, and that's really cutting down the wait times and serving our people.

1930

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Lambton—Kent—Middlesex would like to reply.

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** I want to say thank you very much to the members for Beaches—East York, Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Hamilton East and Ottawa—Orléans for their comments.

In our throne speech, we talked about all the different issues. The members especially from Beaches—East York and from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell talked about birth certificates. When I was first elected, one of the biggest issues my office had to deal with was birth certificates. It was an incredibly frustrating thing for not just my staff but for all of my constituents to try and get a birth certificate. That needed to be solved, and it is solved. We are moving forward to improve that whole system, and we are doing that.

In terms of the throne speech, our constituents are looking for improvement in areas such as education and health care. Those are also very important issues in rural Ontario, as they are in urban Ontario. In my particular riding, Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital has realized a reduced waiting time for cataract surgery because of funding from our government. The people in our community are actually able to get cataract surgery done more quickly now than those even in the city of London. So we're really enjoying the benefits.

The throne speech is a discussion of where we're going and how we're continuing on the path that we have set out for the things we told our constituents and the electorate when we were elected that we would do. This is just to confirm that we are still on that path.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo—Wellington):** I'm delighted to have this chance tonight to speak for a few minutes in response to last week's throne speech, which was read by the Honourable James Bartleman, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

In the 15 years that I have been privileged by my constituents to serve in this assembly, I've been witness to the pageantry of numerous throne speeches, reflecting the perspectives of governments of all stripes. I have seen the passionate idealism of the New Democrats, the nonsense common sense of our Progressive Conservative Party, and the all-things-to-all-people effort of the current government. Each speech painted a canvas in broad

strokes, as is normally the tradition of throne speeches, outlining the future course of action for the government for the coming session; the legislation that the government plans to propose to the Legislature for its consideration; the new ideas that are intended to improve the quality of life of residents of the province who sent us here; an outline of how our health services will be improved; how our schools will be improved; how our efforts to protect our natural environment will be improved; how safety on our streets and in our communities will be improved; how our basic infrastructure, so long neglected, like roads and bridges and sewers and water services, will be improved; how the government will ensure that our economic competitiveness, our ability to create new jobs, will be improved; how the prospects of our farm families, many of whom are facing severe crisis, will be improved; during Small Business Month, how our entrepreneurs' prospects will be improved; how our efforts to promote Ontario's world-class tourism attractions will be improved. A plan for the future: This is what throne speeches traditionally represent.

What did we hear last Tuesday? I don't think the most partisan of government MPPs would have the audacity to suggest that last week's throne speech constituted a plan for the future. Rehash? Yes. Progress report of accomplishments to date? Yes. Self-congratulatory political treatise? Perhaps. But visionary plan for the future? Definitely not. It was thin gruel for an electorate hungry for answers to the challenges facing Ontario today and thirsting for a leadership rooted in integrity.

1940

For we know that this Liberal government at Queen's Park continues to be hobbled by its reputation as being a party of promise-breakers who have reverted to the traditional Liberal pattern of governing: tax and spend. As a result, Ontario is at risk of squandering its hard-earned prosperity, which manifests itself as slower growth in the economy, fewer new jobs being created, government spending which exceeds revenue, a higher provincial debt and higher taxes. After two years of Liberal government, there are clouds on Ontario's horizon.

And what does our party offer in response? A new leader, John Tory, who is principled and pragmatic, hard-working and genuine, smart and decent; a record in government that, while not perfect, showed we kept our word and had the courage to confront problems that previous governments had swept under the carpet for years; an experienced caucus, which day to day is calling the government to account and rebuilding the sense of trust that we will need to govern again; and tens of thousands of members, volunteers who believe fervently in the values and principles of our party, values and principles that will motivate and animate our policy development process as we build toward the next election on October 4, 2007.

I want to take a few moments now to remind members of some of the important issues which I continue to put before the government as the priorities of the residents of Waterloo—Wellington. Our Waterloo—Wellington transportation action plan is something I have been promoting



since 2003. It's geared toward ensuring that drivers and their families can travel and commute safely. It's also an action plan to enable businesses to move their products to market efficiently, which supports jobs. The Waterloo-Wellington transportation action plan is motivated by my belief that it is my obligation to ensure that our area receives its fair share of provincial transportation dollars.

The price of gasoline at the pump has skyrocketed in recent weeks, and believe me, I've noticed it too. It's especially galling when you consider that the provincial government is charging 14.7 cents a litre of gas in tax. That adds up quickly. For example, on a 50-litre fill up, the province of Ontario's take is \$7.35. The Liberals decided to share part of the gas tax with municipalities, but they deliberately excluded rural and small-town Ontario by flowing all of this gas tax money exclusively to cities for transit projects.

I know that our cities need help with their transit systems, but to deny that rural municipalities face similar challenges with their roads and bridges is to demonstrate a complete disregard for most of the province in terms of geography, most of our municipalities in terms of their number, and certainly most of my riding of Waterloo-Wellington. It is unfair, unjust and untenable, especially when you consider that the federal government is sharing part of its gas tax with municipalities and is giving support to municipalities large and small.

Health care continues to be the number one concern on most people's minds. Will timely, quality health care be there for me or my family or my neighbour, when and if we need it? Answering this question in the affirmative must be a central preoccupation of any provincial government.

In the township of Centre Wellington, in the community of Fergus, the Groves Memorial Community Hospital has for years maintained a sterling reputation for caring and compassion. In spite of this, we continue to wait for approval from the Ministry of Health so that we can begin the next stage of planning for our redevelopment project to meet the needs of our growing population. We have raised almost \$15 million, and we've been waiting for this approval now for almost two years. While our community has been patient, as the MPP for Waterloo-Wellington, my patience is beginning to wear thin. We need an immediate answer from the minister, giving the hospital approval to move forward with its redevelopment plan to make the excellent health care provided by Groves even better.

Mr. Speaker, you know of my support for double-hatter firefighters, an issue that I've been working on for more than three years now. As I've said repeatedly, as long as there is a need for a private member's bill to protect the right of double-hatter firefighters to volunteer in their home communities, then I will continue to fight for it.

Typically, a double-hatter firefighter works full-time for a city fire department and lives in a small town nearby. On his days off, he offers his services to protect his neighbours. No union should have the right to prevent

him from offering his skills, talents and expertise to make his community safer, yet this is what the firefighters' union seeks to do.

Recently, it was brought to my attention that this union is once again turning up the heat on these dedicated volunteers, who simply want to apply their skills and training to make their neighbours safer. A few days ago, I received a letter from Fire Chief Tim Bond of the Kemptville Fire Department in eastern Ontario, who has written to the Premier asking the government to take immediate action in support of double-hatters. He writes, "Due to the union's current intimidation campaign, our community is losing a volunteer firefighter with 22 years' experience who is a senior captain/leader in our fire department. You don't just train ordinary people to replace this depth of experience overnight. It will be extremely difficult, very expensive and will take a long time to replace his skills."

He goes on, "Over the past two years we have lost four members due to union pressure. These firefighters were my front-line men/officers/leaders. They were forced to resign against their will. This has had a major negative impact on our fire department which will take a long time to rectify."

After making reference to some 206 municipalities that in recent months have passed resolutions addressed to the government in support of double-hatter firefighters, Chief Bond says, "Premier McGuinty, we need you to stand up for the safety of our communities and we need you to protect the rights of individuals who choose to volunteer. Now is the time. Please take action and get it done."

Obviously I couldn't agree more, and I've written to the Premier as well and asked for his intervention and response to resolve this issue.

On the issue of education, which was a central theme of this throne speech, the government took credit for achieving peace and stability in our classrooms. What they neglected to say is that they have bought peace with the teachers' unions at a very high price to the taxpayer.

The good news is that our students are no longer being used as pawns in an unfortunate and wholly unnecessary political battle. The bad news is that the Minister of Education is apparently looking at lowering the standards that had been set to measure student achievement, standards that encouraged a culture of continuous improvement in our schools, allowing our students—all of our students—to achieve their full potential.

While we must be there to help all students demonstrate their special talents and achieve these higher standards, any reduction in our expectations that they do their very best is something we cannot support. Instead, we must encourage all our students to reach as high as they can, even into the stratosphere.

As I mentioned earlier, our farm families in many cases are facing their greatest economic challenge in a generation. Commodity prices are stuck at 25-year lows because of US and European Union subsidies. Provincial government policy and regulation have made our farm families feel besieged. Our beef producers have struggled

for two years through the loss of their most important export market and the resulting collapse of beef prices. Now that the US border has finally reopened to our beef exports, it will still take years if these farm families are ever to recover the loss of equity that they've experienced. As an MPP proud to represent a largely rural riding, I would have to ask, could governments have done more to help? I think the answer is yes.

Consider again Ontario's economy. We know that the world economy is dynamic and ever-changing. We are faced with new challenges from emerging economies like China and India. As a result of a number of factors, Ontario is slipping as Canada's economic engine. In the past year there has been a disturbing trend of lost manufacturing jobs—jobs in factories and industries that have helped make our province the driving force in the country. While the throne speech paid lip service to the need for a strong and growing economy, it completely ignored the pending crisis in our manufacturing sector. Surely the provincial government has enough evidence to conclude that immediate action is needed to ensure that we can continue to compete and win.

Last May, I introduced a private member's resolution to address some of these issues, and it calls upon the standing committee on finance and economic affairs to immediately begin an investigation into Ontario's industrial and economic competitiveness and develop an action plan to maintain and expand our domestic and international markets in the coming years. The government should take action in support of this resolution and all MPPs should be given this opportunity to help support an effort to transform our competitive challenges into competitive advantages.

Having consulted with business leaders in Ontario on these issues, I've received letters of endorsement from key organizations that are concerned about job creation in this province. So far, I have received expressions of support for my resolution from Richard Paton, president and CEO of Canada's Chemical Producers; Thomas d'Aquino, president and chief executive of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives; Jack Mintz, president and CEO of the C.D. Howe Institute; Sherri Helmka, executive director of the Employers' Advocacy Council in Kitchener; James Flood, director of government relations at the Ontario Real Estate Association; and the Honourable Perrin Beatty, president and CEO of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters.

1950

I would like to quote Perrin Beatty, who said, "I believe that the study you propose can make a valuable contribution to Ontario's and Canada's economic future. CME would be pleased to collaborate fully with you and your colleagues on all sides of the" House "in ensuring that the initiative will bring forward concrete and achievable strategies for improving the competitiveness of Ontario's industry, which is so important to the economic success of all of Canada. We congratulate you on taking this initiative, which we hope will be strongly supported by all parties."

Even though there was no reference to it in the throne speech this past fall, there was some good news for families who are now compelled by provincial legislation to purchase new car booster seats for their older children. My private member's Bill 77, introduced in May 2004, proposed tax relief for parents having to purchase these seats, exempting them from the 8% retail sales tax. I was very pleased when the government adopted the principle of my bill as government policy in its 2005 budget. They listened, and today, if you have to buy a booster seat for your child or grandchild, you don't have to pay provincial sales tax because of Bill 77.

Another thing that was not mentioned in the throne speech, but should have been, were the major concerns and issues swirling around the influence that financial contributors appear to have on politicians and on public policy. Last winter, to restore integrity and accountability, I introduced yet another private member's bill, Bill 180, to provide for the immediate public reporting of political contributions that exceed \$100.

Within days after I asked a question in the House on this issue, the Liberals responded with legislation committing to a system that they call "real-time" reporting of political donations. The government legislation, Bill 214, would require public reporting within five business days. The changes I pursued through my bill would have required the real-time reporting on a Web site of the name of the contributor and the amount given, "real time" meaning the actual day that the cheques were cashed.

My bill would have also required this accountability to be comprehensive, so that donations to constituency associations would not be excluded, making all ridings accountable, as they should be, everywhere in the province.

I know that there are other MPPs who wish to give their remarks, so I will conclude. As I do, I want to paraphrase our leader, the member for Dufferin–Peel–Wellington–Grey, who led the debate for Progressive Conservatives by talking about what average working families would have hoped to hear from this government in its throne speech but did not.

When we look at higher provincial taxes, higher electricity bills, higher gasoline prices, higher natural gas prices, higher interest rates, higher property taxes, lost jobs and little said about future prospects, I absolutely agree that at the half-time point of this government, the clouds that I alluded to earlier have indeed rolled in and we're experiencing rainy days for the average Ontarian.

Ours is the mission to see Ontarians through this storm, with hope that we will continue to hold this government to account and offer Ontarians a better day on the horizon, what we in Waterloo–Wellington call the promise of the future.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to share my time with the member for Durham.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Durham.

**Mr. O'Toole:** It's a real pleasure to follow the member from Waterloo–Wellington, because his commitment is beyond reproach. I would say I am quite supportive of his remarks, especially the work he's done on



the double-hatter issue. It's a tireless effort, and I would put on the record that I'm supportive of that. Certainly I think of fire chief Richard Miller in Port Perry, who would argue on your behalf.

I would say that it is a controversial issue, and he's had courage. That's what's lacking in this throne speech. If I want to talk about the economic advantage, it's arguable that under the guise that their Minister of Finance has resigned, the economic advantage may be that he has resigned. But Smokey the Bear, the former Minister of Energy, Dwight Duncan, taking over is another question of a shadow cast over Ontario's energy sector, and there could be a lot said about that.

I just want to put a few things on the record. You know, what really is important here tonight, for the people watching and those few listening, is that tonight was a night we all celebrated, because Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada had a celebration. I want to name just a few people who were recognized. I want to thank Big Brothers and Big Sisters for the work they've done, and also the many volunteers, not just in my riding of Durham but across the province.

I just want to mention a few of the people I can see here in the House tonight who were recognized: the member from York North, Julia Munro, who's sitting right in front of me; the member from Whitby-Ajax, Jim Flaherty, who received an award; the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Bill Murdoch; and others here tonight such as Jim Wilson from Simcoe-Grey; and Mr. Bartolucci, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Many people recognized a worthy cause. I congratulate you. I was very humbled, actually.

**Hon. John Gerretsen (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Here's another one.

**Mr. O'Toole:** And Mr. Gerretsen, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I brought my plaque, but most important, I brought the pin presented to me, and other members of the House here tonight for their great work.

All of us, at the end of the day—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. O'Toole:** Jeff Leal, from Peterborough, of course.

Almost all members here tonight know the importance of working in our communities. I was impressed because Lisa McNee-Baker, the executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters in Oshawa-Clarington, and Donna Paquette, a teacher at a French immersion school, were there tonight. She's the Big Sister for Emily, her Little Sister, and they were featured, I would say, in a non-partisan way. It had nothing to do with anything that I do.

I think of the volunteer board members who were there tonight. This is what makes Ontario strong: volunteerism. There need to be more recognition and opportunities at a non-partisan event like tonight. I think that Deb Matthews did a very nice job, as well as the Big Brothers and Big Sisters, who put on the event tonight. I think of Chris Charlton and the work he's done. He's the director of relations for Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Canada. I thank them for putting on the reception and I

thank the members who attended. The ongoing work that needs to be done: Why is that necessary when this province is so strong?

I was going through some preparation notes for this evening, and I'm actually looking for them now. I would say that the time has run out. But I want to put on the record that my wife is watching, and she has to teach tomorrow. I know it's difficult because there's so much prep time that isn't allowed in the new Kennedy curriculum. Thank you very much for the time that Mr. Arnott left me.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Prue:** It's always a privilege to listen to my Conservative counterparts. They talk and they criticize the government, sometimes very fairly. Sometimes they're right. When they say that the government throne speech talked about platitudes and self-congratulation, they're right, because that's basically all that was in the document that the poor Lieutenant Governor had to read with a straight face. I will tell you that they are right on the rural stuff and on northern Ontario. But I have to tell you that they are so wrong when they get into the nostalgia about the great, good old days with Mike Harris and that ilk. They are so terribly wrong to equate the Mike Harris government with any kind of direction. If they had any kind of direction at all, I would equate it with "Wrong Way" Corrigan—you know the guy who hopped in the plane and was supposed to go to California and went to Ireland instead? For those of you who weren't here in the last Parliament, that's exactly what happened with Mike Harris.

**Mr. Jim Flaherty (Whitby-Ajax):** That's a slur against the Irish. Apologize.

**Mr. Prue:** I will not. My mother's name is O'Sullivan, and I'm right.

What they did was wrong: Just look at the mess they made with the cities and amalgamations; look at the mess they made with downsizing; look at the mess they made with the poor; look at the mess they made on all the poverty issues, on housing, on homelessness; and look at the mess they made in finances by leaving you guys with \$5.6 billion in deficit.

I have to tell you, when you talk about nostalgia, that they're dead wrong to go back to that. If you should do anything on that side of the House, learn the lesson of what not to do. I want to tell you that the throne speech did not set the best example.

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**Mr. Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North):** First of all, there are a number of aspects to deal with in the throne speech, but I thought, with your permission, I would like to speak about some of the health care initiatives. As a physician myself, I've seen some of the changes first-hand.

I'm reminded, for example, of patient Mr. N.S., if I may call him that, who basically had what we call degenerative arthritis. The bones in his knees had essentially collapsed in on themselves to the point where, as he would say, "Doctor, I'm even getting gypsy music"

coming from his knees because of the grinding, the mutual application of pressure and friction.

I recall, during the previous administration, having to arrange a full knee replacement for this individual for his right knee, which actually took; we couldn't believe it—one and a half years of waiting time. You can imagine the ultimate effect on this gentleman's quality of life: the daily suffering he had to endure, the amount of medication he had to ingest, and the diffuse effect it had on him, his family and his outlook.

I am pleased to say that this government understands, and using some of the vocabulary of the member from Waterloo—Wellington, in fact we are reaching higher, yes, into the stratosphere, with regard to the provision of all these new procedures, whether for imaging or urgent surgeries such as cataracts, cancer or heart-saving measures.

Enfin, je voudrais dire que je suis très encouragé par nos efforts, nos mesures et nos initiatives en soins de santé.

**Mr. Flaherty:** I said yesterday in this place that the throne speech was remarkable for the fact that it was thunderingly boring. It was also remarkable for its failure to disclose any plan. In Alice in Wonderland there is the wonderful line about, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will do," and that was reflected in the speech. It wandered all over the place. There is the absence of vision, the absence of a plan in a time when Ontario is suffering, and it's suffering in the north.

The Minister of Northern Development is here, the member for Sudbury. Yesterday I had the Steelworkers in my office talking about the closure of the mill by Abitibi that's coming up this weekend in Kenora. Hundreds of people are going to be out of work.

I was in North Bay on Saturday. You know, criminal justice is important. People are concerned about violent crime. This is a serious matter: the drug trade in this province. What did I hear in North Bay on Saturday? The youth justice committees that we brought in in 1999: The people of North Bay had 70 people come forward to volunteer to serve on the youth justice committee. Thirty of them paid their own way to get the training they needed. Have they got their funding from the government of Ontario? No.

The minister for the north is here. Take care of North Bay. This is a good program. The youth justice committees actually work, Minister. They help young people not graduate to adult criminal court. Pay attention to the north. Pay attention to Kenora, and pay attention to the youth justice committee in North Bay. I beg to you to do that for the sake of the youth in the north. It's a good program. It works. People shouldn't have to pay for their own training. Would you please talk to the Attorney General? You're in the cabinet. Get the money to the people in North Bay.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. The member for Hamilton East.

**Ms. Horwath:** I have to say, as a relative newcomer, that I feel like I tumbled down the rabbit hole of fantasy

coming into this House, especially with regard to the debate tonight, because these guys over here have a fantasy about what they did and didn't do in this province when they were at the helm. I believe they decimated this province in very, very many ways. It's not just about poverty; it's also about what they've done to municipalities and what they didn't do to fix some of the serious problems we're now having to deal with.

Having said that, we then go into the fantasy of the people across the way who have their heads somewhere in the stratosphere, whose egos are the only things they're really worried about, because they are not looking at the reality that faces them in this province. Unfortunately, they've come back with a throne speech, after proroguing this House, that does nothing to address the real problems that the previous government caused in this province. Although they talked about it at length when they were running in the last provincial election, not only did they not accomplish anything in the last portion of their term, but now setting a course for the next portion of their term, their course is not what it was before, which means nothing, which means basically that the people of Ontario cannot expect any real changes. They cannot expect any real progress on major, major issues that are facing the people of Ontario, whether that is the issue of the eroding standard of living in every community across the province; whether that is the issue of still unresolved problems with major pieces of legislation, like the Tenant Protection Act; major problems like CVA or market value assessment; major concerns with a number of different pieces of the economy; losses of jobs; inability to keep the manufacturing sector robust; inability to make sure that communities have a decent standard of living, because they are losing all of the good-paying jobs. Quite frankly, this government has a lot of work to do, and they don't know where the heck they're going.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Durham, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. O'Toole:** The members from Beaches—East York, Etobicoke North, Whitby—Ajax and Hamilton East, thank you for responding. Most of the general comment was basically that we're paying more and getting less. During the throne speech, I was looking around at some of the dignitaries here, and former Liberal Premier David Peterson was nodding off. That says it all. Most of the editorials, basically, were noncommittal on whether there was any substance. As I think back on the rather uneventful throne speech, it was kind of lay low, try to not get noticed. Basically, the biggest promise they made was to cut back the waiting time for birth certificates to 15 business days.

This troubles me. I look at a recent press release, and I'm just picking up the mail we all receive. Some of you should read it. What it says here is, "Dalton McGuinty has broken promises, hurting taxpayers." They're paying more every year. "Not only are Ontarians paying twice"—this is the issue. It came up in question period. Our leader, John Tory, has unearthed the travesty of their tax-and-spend strategy.



What we're now finding out with the new health premium is that each Ontario individual earning over \$30,000 a year is paying about \$900 a year. If you look at it, that's almost \$100 a month. Now, apparently, according to this Ontario court ruling, it has been ruled that certain public sector groups—I could name them: the Toronto Transit Commission, city of Hamilton, firefighters and others—have filed an arbitration concern, and now the province is going to have to pay their portion of the health premium, while my constituents, who are hard-working families, are going to be paying their own premiums, plus they're now going to be paying the premiums for the public sector.

That's the legacy of the Liberal government: tax and spend.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Prue:** I wondered where to start my speech tonight, and I was thinking, Michael, it was your four-year anniversary just a few weeks ago. You've been in this House now for four years. I still remember that by-election night, and the throne speech brought some of it back, because the widow of Mr. Hunter was here. It was a good thing that the government did in terms of naming the park after him. He was a very great environmentalist, and a very gentle and nice man. Somebody had to win the by-election, and it was me, but I do take my hat off to him for everything he did in terms of Greenpeace, what he did for the environment, and how he put his whole soul and heart forward to run for the Liberal Party, although not successfully. You did the right thing in naming the park after him. In fact, in my own community there was a tree planting this past week, and the community planted a number of trees in his honour to try to keep the environmental dream alive.

I think back to that same night four years ago, or four years and a couple of weeks ago, and what was said and what was done that night, and I still remember my acceptance speech to all the crowd that was there cheering. They didn't cheer for much, because I don't know whether I said all that much that was exciting, until it got to the part where somebody yelled out, "What are you going to do at Queen's Park?" and I said, "I'm going to Queen's Park to get rid of Mike Harris." That got the biggest cheer of the night. I was only here a couple of days or a week when Mr. Harris stood up and announced that he was going to retire. Everybody on this side of the House stood up and said, "You did it," and I stood up and took a bow. It took me two weeks. I don't know whether that had much to do with it at all. But I do have to tell you, it was kind of a good day.

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I have to tell you, though, four years later, I sat here listening to the Lieutenant Governor make the throne speech. I know he didn't write it. I don't blame him for what he read out. I know he was reading stuff. The only really good part to me was when he started off talking about the 1.2 million books that he delivered to northern aboriginal communities. I thought that was a wonderful thing that that man had done, a wonderful direction he

had taken personally as the Lieutenant Governor, as the Queen's representative of this province. But as he went on and started reading what you told him to say, what was bereft, what was not there were the lofty goals that I expected from the Liberal Party, the lofty goals that I heard in the last election, the dreams that you had when you ousted the Harrisites. I did not hear any of that. I did not hear the ideals of where you want to take this province, of the things that you had said—the 231 promises you had made—and of the direction that people had dreamed that you would take them after eight long and tough years. I did not hear all of those great promises of 2003 reiterated.

Instead, as I said earlier in a statement, I heard only two new directions. One was welcomed, which was a grade 12 certificate for those young people who cannot pass the curriculum. That's welcomed. I'm going to tell you, it's a good thing.

The other one I think is kind of bizarre: the birth certificates. I think it's kind of bizarre because it only affects those people who have computers, those people who are computer savvy. The constituents who come in to see me and who have been waiting eight months for a birth certificate because they mailed it in, because they only had the wherewithal to buy a 50-cent stamp, because they had to fill out the form—eight months. My office is phoning weekly trying to find those and trying to get them. Oftentimes, when they find out, all that happens—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Prue:** I can't hear myself with these guys screaming, so I have to talk louder.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Prue:** We have to phone and write many, many times in order to get the process restarted. Sometimes they say that they can't find the cheque, even though the cheque has been cashed. Then we have to go through a whole process of making sure that the cheque was cashed. I have to tell you, you promised 15 days for people on computers. I will cheer when you promise 15 days for someone who mails it in, because I will know then that every Ontario citizen is being treated fairly, not those who have the thousand-dollar computers and the laptops and all the other stuff in their homes.

But having heard that, there was such a public yearning two years ago at the election. You guys went out there and said: "Vote for us. It's something new. It's a new promise. It's going to be a new world." And a lot of people voted for you; a lot of people who ordinarily would have voted for me, voted for you. I know them; they talked to me. They voted for you because they wanted them gone. They didn't care that they really believed what I was saying. They wanted them gone so badly that they voted for you and trusted what you said—

**Mr. Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** They knew you were a real Liberal anyway.

**Mr. Prue:** No, I'm not a real Liberal.

You know how I love to quote people. I'm going to quote Thomas Hobbes, but I'm going to take it a little bit out of context because I want to talk about the Harris

years. Thomas Hobbes is famous for what he described as the life of man. I want to say that the life of this province for eight years, between those years of 1995 and the last election, can be described best as brutal, nasty, solitary and all too long, because that's—

**Mr. Tim Hudak (Erie-Lincoln):** Short.

**Mr. Prue:** Yes, you've got that in there too, but the last part is what I wanted to change: It was all too long. Many people were victimized. Many people were marginalized, like those on welfare. Remember the welfare mothers? They wouldn't give them the money because they were going to drink beer with it? That was disgraceful. Do you remember the clawbacks? They took all the money that the federal government gave for the poorest of the poor kids and they clawed it back, saying they were going to use it for other purposes. Remember the frozen ODSP? Nobody who was on ODSP got any additional money for years and years, although everybody in the world knew that most of these unfortunate souls were not able to work because of circumstances far beyond their control. Do you remember when they talked about the housing boondoggle? People had nowhere to live and the homeless were on the streets and were dying. Remember the poverty and the homelessness and all of the stuff that was there, and nothing was done?

I remember all of that stuff, but I have to tell you with great chagrin, read the 26 pages of your document. There isn't a single word about poverty, there isn't a single word about welfare, there isn't a single word about what you're going to do on the clawback, there isn't a single word about what you're going to do with the frozen ODSP payments. You congratulate the federal government for finally getting into housing but you aren't going to spend any money at all on housing yourself.

I shake my head, because you know what I think about those guys and what they did for eight years, and then I look over there and I see people doing the same thing by omission. It's not because you're happy and proud. You don't stand up and say, "I'm happy and proud to do this," like they used to, but the end result is exactly the same. You end up doing the same thing. There's nothing in that speech—find it. Is there anything in there about what you're going to do to help the plight of those who are on welfare, of those single parents with kids who haven't enough money or food and have to go to the food banks? Is there anything in there about the poverty of those kids and what's going to happen when you grow up in Regent Park or Jane-Finch or Teesdale or Malvern? Is there anything in there that you're going to help them? There's nothing in there that you're going to help them.

Is there anything about your commitment on the clawback? I remember what Dalton McGuinty said, what Sandra Pupatello said and what all of you said: You would end the clawback. Is there anything in the throne speech that you're going to do any of that? There is not a single thing that you are going to do to help that. Is there anything in there about giving more money to ODSP? You didn't in the last budget. Is there anything to say that your plan is to finally make it better? Is there anything in

there about your plan for the two years? You talked about lots of things, but is there anything about that? There's not a single word. Is there anything in there—other than to say, "We've signed an accord with the federal government, which is going to release money"—that you're actually going to put some of the province's money into housing? There's not a single thing.

I have to tell you, I am so hugely disappointed. You saw, you knew and you campaigned against the brutality of those years, but when you have a chance to do something, you are singularly silent on that issue. I say that with chagrin.

I listened too to see what you were going to say on other issues. The whole issue of democratic renewal—there's a minister now responsible for democratic renewal and I'm suddenly on that committee. I remember the time of Mike Harris. I remember imposing the megacity upon the people of Toronto when they voted 78% to oppose it. I remember the downloading exercise that made it literally impossible for Toronto, Hamilton, London, Ottawa and every other municipality in this province to actually accomplish their goals. I remember the imposition of MVA—which is probably causing a lot of you some difficulties these days—on all of the municipalities, even though the suggestions were that it should be phased, it should be done right. There were a whole bunch of other things that needed to be done that weren't done and it's coming back to cause problems.

I have some difficulties, because I listened to that throne speech too about what you were going to do for democracy, and although there was a line or two in there that you were actually going to do something in terms of changing the democratic structure, making this place more democratic, making the people more relevant to the process, there really wasn't much there.

**2020**

Yesterday, there was a group here, some eight or 10 people sitting in that gallery, who came from the city of Kawartha Lakes. Of all the people, I think Mr. Gerretsen knows them best. Perhaps Mike Colle, the new minister, knows them as well, because in one of his more brilliant moments he described it as the city of Kawartha Mistakes. To this day, people still talk about what a silly idea it was for the previous government to amalgamate a whole bunch of farmland and pretend that it was a city.

If you've never been there, go there. I go there or drive through there once in a while. I go up to Lindsay. I have some relatives there. I remember one day driving from my parents, who live near Bancroft, Ontario, in a little town called Cardiff, and all of a sudden there was a sign, as I'm coming down toward Lindsay, saying, "Thank you for coming to the city of Kawartha Lakes." I drove and drove and it was at least one hour before I drove out and it said, "You're now leaving Kawartha Lakes." I saw some farms, I saw some highway, I saw some trees, I saw a couple of rivers, a few lakes, but do you know something? I don't think I ever saw anything that looked like a city. To this day, I really ponder why this government thinks it's a city or why the previous government thought it was a city.



The people were here yesterday because they believe in democracy. I'm coming back to this whole thing about electoral reform. The government imposed upon them a city which they did not want and the people fought back. The government then recognized how wrong this was and offered them an opportunity to vote against the city, if they didn't want to stay in a city. The people all got together and decided they were going to fight it. They worked with the then minister, Minister Hodgson, and developed a question, a referendum, which the minister said would be binding upon the people of the new city of Kawartha Lakes. Those people would have an opportunity to undo an amalgamation which was unjust, unfair and quite simply ludicrous—beyond belief ludicrous. It didn't work. It was impossible. It was not, is not and maybe for 100 years will not be a city, and they voted to de-amalgamate. It wasn't a landslide, but they voted to de-amalgamate. In fact, more people as a percentage voted to de-amalgamate that city than the number of people as a percentage who voted in Newfoundland to join Canada.

Today, we all think that because 52% of the people in Newfoundland voted to join Canada and 48% voted not to join, that was a bloody good vote, that there was democracy. We recognized it and we welcomed them, but the people of Kawartha Lakes had the same kind of a vote. It was about 52% to 48% to de-amalgamate, but we don't recognize that. This government doesn't recognize that. That's democracy that doesn't work because you don't agree with it. You have ignored that.

I have to tell you, when Dalton McGuinty says—and I quote him on several of these quotes:

"I have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city."

"... Ontario Liberals believe in local democracy. We believe the best solutions are local solutions and that local residents should have the right to decide on the future of their municipality."

"... Ontario Liberals will place the decision-making power where it belongs—with local residents. I hope this clears up any misunderstanding."

"I and my caucus are still interested in what the people have to say."

"We're committed to the referendum."

I have to ask you—there are two lines of lofty goals to change how people vote. You want to change how this Parliament operates, and at the end of all of that, do you know what you say? You're going to hold a referendum. You're going to listen to the people. Why would I, why would the people of Kawartha Lakes, why would any other democrat, why would any other citizen believe that if you will not bind yourself to the binding referendum of the people of Kawartha Lakes; that you will bind yourself to change how this Parliament operates, that you will bind yourself to change how the electoral system works or that you will bind yourself to anything the people have to say? I have to tell you, those are very hollow words.

They are very hollow words. Until this government and this minister and this Premier change how they look on the city of Kawartha Lakes and those people who continue to fight for what they believe is just and right, then nothing else you have to say on your referendum, nothing else you have to say on democracy holds any sway with me or with them or, I will tell you, with hundreds of thousands of people in this province.

I have to look too at issues that were not in there. One of them that is very dear to my heart is that of autism and the plight of those poor autistic children. We remember what the Premier had to say in the throes of the election, how he was going to make sure that every single autistic child was looked after. We have brought them into this Legislature, young autistic children and their families, to plead with the Premier to keep his goal and to do what he promised. I know it's expensive. You know it's expensive. In fact, the Conservatives knew it was expensive. John Baird, who was then the minister, made no bones about it. He wasn't going to do it because it cost too much money. But I will tell you, I think it's worth every penny that needs to be spent. For every child you save from a life of autism, for every one who doesn't end up in an institution, for every one who learns enough to be able to be a contributor to this society, you have done a great thing. Yes, it's going to be expensive, but what is the alternative? Is the alternative to put them in homes for the rest of their lives? Is the alternative to lock them away? I don't think so. I don't think that's what you want either. But if you look at your throne speech, where was the reference to autism? Where was there any reference to people with disabilities? Where was there any reference to the things you had promised to do?

This is what makes me sad. This is what I think makes a lot of people unhappy with politicians. It makes them wary of them. It makes them not want to vote. It makes them think their vote is useless. It makes them think that politicians are perhaps not as truthful as they should be. If you really believe those things, then they should have been in your throne speech, they should have been a direction you want to go, because when they are not there, when all of these things are not there, when all of these things are left out, then one has to think that they are left out on purpose.

It was a sad day to listen to the Lieutenant Governor. It was a sad day, not because—he is, in my mind, one of the truly remarkable people of this province. What he has done in his lifetime is amazing, coming from his life, coming from the aboriginal community, overcoming huge obstacles even to this day. He is honest and open. But he read out a speech that I do not think reflected where this province should go and where I do not believe the majority of members of your caucus on that side of the House want to go. Do not pat yourself on the back for what you promised in the past. Pat yourself on the back for what you're going to do in the future.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Centre):** I rise this evening to speak on the issue of improving health care for our people, which was highlighted in the throne

speech, of which I'm proud and passionate as an MPP, as a Bramptonian and as an Ontarian. The throne speech reinforced our government's dedication to education, health care and the economy.

Tonight, I'm particularly proud of one specific area of investment in health care in Brampton, particularly in Brampton Centre, of which I am the representative. We had an announcement quite recently on the redevelopment of the William Osler Health Care Peel Memorial Lynch Street hospital, an existing hospital that needed to be renovated. Minister Smitherman came out to talk about the redevelopment project, and I can't tell you how lucky I feel as the member. I have an existing hospital that has seven cranes working on-site, and now I have an additional project of a redevelopment for continuing care beds to be brought to my hospital and my health care community. So I'm particularly proud. The redevelopment project at the former Peel Memorial Hospital site is scheduled to be implemented in 2009-10. It's a pretty short timeline for my hospital board. They're incredibly excited. I know they're going to be working with our community and asking them what they'd like to see in their new, redeveloped Peel Memorial Hospital site. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care had previously approved a \$9-million grant to help us design and work with the costs associated with the planning process and the conversion of the space at Peel Memorial Hospital.

**2030**

As I said earlier, I feel very lucky. I have a 608-bed hospital underway, with seven cranes. It's a wonderful site. It makes the hair on the back of your neck prickle to know that we're building something so magnificent, one of the biggest construction projects anywhere in Canada. I'm particularly proud.

**Mr. O'Toole:** I think back to the comments made by the member from Beaches–East York. I know he means well. I think it's like a strong economy argument, that you have to have the economy to generate the revenue.

But if I listen to my constituents, which I do on a very regular and committed basis in the riding of Durham—I just want that on the record clearly. I work for them. Now I'm getting a lot of calls, as you probably are, Mr. Speaker, on MPAC. I try to help people, saying this government promised change. There really is no change occurring, and it's unfortunate.

I was talking to the Minister of Municipal Affairs just a few minutes ago, and he seems to be receptive to some things and not receptive to others. There are home heating issues, electricity issues, gas, gas tax. These are also additional taxes. They are Liberal taxes by any other name. I said earlier in my remarks that recently the health tax, which is costing the ordinary family, with two parents working and a \$60,000 income—they're paying close to \$1,000 a year, \$1,200. That's \$100 a month. So now we've got the health tax, we've got the municipal tax, we've got the electricity, we've got the natural gas, we've got the gasoline. These are treacherous ways to put more tax burden on the hard-working people of Ontario.

This throne speech talked about economic advantage. Be warned, voters of Ontario: This government has

raised your taxes and increased spending. The revenue in the last public accounts went up by \$10 billion. Do you know what happened? Their expenditures went up by \$5 billion. Ask yourself the question, are you any better off after the heavy tax burden of this Liberal government? I think you'll find that the answer is no.

**Ms. Horwath:** It's my pleasure to make some comments on the debate that was brought forward by my colleague and friend from the Beaches–East York riding. I'm always impressed by the way that Michael is able to set, in a very clear outline, the failures of this government, doing so in a way that is so meaningful for the real people of Ontario. Once again he proved his ability to grasp not only what the hopes were in 2003 but what the disappointments are since the restating of the government's agenda, or lack thereof, in terms of solving some of the problems that were foisted upon us by the previous Conservative regime. I'm looking forward to making my own comments on the throne speech in a short time, later on this evening.

It's a huge responsibility that elected officials have, or that people have who put their names forward to represent others in elected capacities during the time of a campaign. Although Michael spoke of some specific campaigns that he participated in, during the last campaign in which I ran, people in Hamilton East were already seeing that the government was failing dismally in the promises they had made, and they thought they would be able to send a message to the government. Unfortunately, the government has become—well, I don't know what they've become, but they've certainly become deaf to the pleas of the people of Ontario, who have asked them to really take note of the serious concerns that are out there. Some of those concerns I'll be outlining a little later on.

**Mr. Patten:** In response to my colleague from Beaches–East York who, by the way, I think is one of the more thoughtful members in this House; I acknowledge that. I work with him on committee, and I see the degree of homework he puts in. But I do want to take him on on one thing that he talked about: that we didn't talk about poverty, we didn't talk about poor people, we didn't talk about people who are at the lower end of the low-income level.

I would say, listen and reflect upon this. We said—and if you look at it, you will find numerous opportunities on the positive side—for example, that we will fund 25,000 new child care spaces and assistance for thousands of low- and middle-income families; we will introduce Best Start, which will ensure our children arrive, on the first day of school, prepared to learn; that 2,100 schools now have smaller classes in junior kindergarten to grade 3 because of hiring 2,400 new teachers. And when you talk at the high school level, we're introducing counsellors at every particular high school to help those kids who are having trouble with their studies and who will be able to move through in their education. Reaching Higher, \$6.2 billion dollars in helping students, provides grants for lower-income youngsters who otherwise might not be there. “‘Accessibility’ means ensuring no qualified



student is denied a higher education because of his or her financial resources.”

“Where you start out in life should not determine how high you can reach,” nor the wealth of your particular family.

Throughout this speech, I would advocate that it's positive. It's not digging in the mire of depression and discouragement. There are numerous opportunities in education, in employment in the medical field and in the environmental field that say we can create a better opportunity for everybody in a universal fashion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Beaches–East York, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Prue:** I'd like to thank my colleagues from Brampton Centre, Durham, Hamilton East and Ottawa Centre. You all talked about things—I only had 20 minutes. I could have talked much longer.

I wished I could have talked about the P3 hospital in Brampton. I wish I could have talked about how it's no different than what the Conservatives offered you, and in fact it is identical to what the Conservatives offered you. Tony Clement, who is no longer with us in this particular House, commented that he couldn't see any difference and, quite frankly, I can't either. But congratulations for having a hospital. I only wish it was a public hospital and that we weren't spending the 20% to make people rich.

**Mr. Patten:** It is a public hospital.

**Mr. Prue:** Privately financed and—OK.

I'm not going to talk about raising taxes—and thank you to my friend from Hamilton East—in the minute that's left.

I did reflect and I didn't talk about the education system, because I have to be quite frank: I think the government, in some respects, has been doing, not an admirable, but at least a decent job on education. There are a whole bunch of things that you could have done better. I think my colleague from Trinity–Spadina has outlined how it could have been done better. But the throne speech did deal in great part with education. Education is important, but you have to understand that the kids from poor communities—

**Ms. Horwath:** They can't learn if they're starving.

**Mr. Prue:** —can't learn if they're hungry. They cannot learn if they don't have opportunity, if they don't have books, if they don't have decent clothes. They can't learn if all the money is being clawed back from their parents. They can't learn if everything is desperation so that they go out and buy guns.

I'm from Regent Park. I know how valuable an education is, and I think it's a great thing when you give equality of opportunity for education, but it cannot be apart from everything else. You cannot make them hungry, you cannot make them poor, and you cannot send them to school in lousy clothes. That's where you have failed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Leal:** It's a pleasure for me to have an opportunity to provide a few remarks on the throne speech. I will be sharing my time with my good friend the member

from Thornhill, Mr. Racco, who is celebrating his 20th anniversary of serving in public life in Ontario.

**2040**

I'll start my remarks by congratulating an institution in the city of Peterborough, the Peterborough Petes, who will be celebrating their 50th anniversary this year—it's their 50th anniversary season—under the directorship of coach Dick Todd and general manager Jeff Twohey. A little-known fact is that Scotty Bowman started his illustrious coaching career in Peterborough in 1959, when the team was owned by the Montreal Canadiens. He got his upbringing and background in Peterborough and went on to be one of the most successful coaches ever in the National Hockey League.

I hear the doom and gloom from my friends opposite. I pick up today's Report on Business from the Globe and Mail. The headline is, “With Economy at Top Speed, Bank of Canada Hits the Brakes.” And a quote: “The Canadian economy now appears to be operating at full production capacity.” Well, that is good. But let me say how that impacts in Peterborough. Quaker Oats, one of the leading manufacturers of cereal products in North America: at full capacity, three shifts. Quickmill Machine, a company that produces large gantry machinery for the mining industry in Canada, has a full-page ad in the Peterborough Examiner virtually every other day looking for new people. Numet Engineering, an engineering company in Peterborough, has another full-page ad in the Peterborough Examiner every other day looking for people. If that's a sign that the Ontario economy is weakening—well, I think it's an indicator that things are going pretty well in Ontario, reinforced by the outline we provided recently in the throne speech.

I want to talk about health care for a moment. My good friend from Brampton here—we all know that that hospital is a publicly owned facility in Brampton and will do a wonderful job serving that community for many years to come. In my own community of Peterborough, on June 20 I had the pleasure to announce that the riding of Peterborough will get a new hospital. On June 27, we started construction. Ellis-Don won the successful bid. I know that a couple of weeks ago, my friend from Durham, a good friend of mine, Mr. O'Toole—his mother-in-law, Madge Hall, I hope is getting better; she broke her hip. Mr. O'Toole said in the estimates committee that he was at the new Peterborough hospital site and couldn't see that anything was going on. I suggested in estimates that perhaps Mr. O'Toole's glasses need to be looked at, because at that time, two weeks ago, we had two cranes on-site. We now have four cranes on-site. The hospital construction will be completed in October 2007 and fully operational by the spring of 2008, and it's a fully publicly owned hospital.

Let me tell what you else. We talk about the health care premium. Well, the health care premium is providing those essential dollars to invest in health care in the province of Ontario. I want to remark that when Mr. Romanow did his royal commission, he said the biggest enemy of public health care in Canada is the status quo.

This is not a status quo government. This is a government that is challenging the health care system. This is a government investing in health care to make it the best in Canada by far.

In my own home town of Peterborough, we have five family health teams. In fact, I'll pay tribute tonight to the team that put it together. Dr. Don Harterre, Mr. Bill Casey, Councillor Bernie Cahill and his counterpart in the county, Deputy Reeve Jay Murray Jones, who head up the Greater Peterborough Health Care Alliance, put together this template for family health teams in our community, which now is being used by other communities across the province of Ontario to set up their family health teams. By providing the necessary dollars, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Honourable George Smitherman, was making these health teams a reality in Peterborough.

I want to talk about education. My good wife, Karan, is watching tonight. She's a grade 8 teacher at St. Teresa's school, and a very good teacher, I might add. I hear all this talk that the only people we helped out were the big union bosses and the teacher unions. Well, I challenge the members of the opposition to take some time to go to Tim Hortons, spend a few bucks to get some doughnuts and coffee, and sit down with rank-and-file teachers in their community, and what is the story that they will share with them? They will tell you that for the first time in not eight but in 13 years—because they went through the social contract, which was really difficult for them, when the NDP and the Hampton-Rae government opened up those contracts and took away things from the teachers' unions—there is peace and stability. When you talk to those rank-and-file teachers, those folks who are in at 7:30 a.m. and who leave perhaps at 6 p.m. at night, they'll tell you that for the first time in 13 years it's a positive learning environment in the province of Ontario. It's important to get those things right in their classrooms. By lowering class sizes we're providing the foundation for the future which will be directly linked to our economic success. That's the good news that was in our throne speech.

To continue, one of the things I'm particularly excited about—you talk about addressing people who have difficulties. The dropout rate in Ontario has been about 30%. By designing a new diploma for those individuals who had dropped out previously, those individuals who are not quite adapted to the academic stream, we're going to provide an alternative diploma for those individuals to help them with the skills training and to actually give them an opportunity and the hope they really need. That's a very important point in our throne speech that we want to pursue.

There's additional good news: health care, education and our investment in the economy. I think of the \$6.2 billion we're going to put into post-secondary education—for the first time in 40 years, a substantial investment in that area. How do we prepare our economy for the future? By making investments in post-secondary education. I read that in 2003 when we looked at the jurisdiction of Ontario in comparison with states in the

United States and other provinces in Canada, we were virtually at the bottom of the heap in the investment we were making in post-secondary education. The Premier recognizes that to have a prosperous economy, to build a foundation for the future, we've got to make those investments. Frankly, in 2007, that will be the yardstick we're going to be measured by.

In other areas, I want to talk about our investment in the auto strategy. Minister Cordiano deserves a lot of credit. In fact, he terminated the Terminator, because he went head to head with Governor Schwarzenegger from California. When he went to Japan, along with Prime Minister Martin, we were able to make that pitch for Ontario to prove that this is the place for auto investment. It's the first time there has been a greenfield investment in this province in over a decade, because we have certain economic advantages that they don't have in other areas. By sustaining our publicly funded health care system in Ontario, it provides us, depending on whose statistics you want to take, between \$1,200 and \$2,000 per vehicle manufactured in Ontario. In fact, General Motors operations in Canada, in Oshawa, are recognized as some of the leaders within the General Motors family; again, public health care gives us a significant advantage. I'm told now that Honda is looking for another investment here in Ontario. What does that say? It's more than just Woodstock. Those kinds of investments give a signal to the world that says there is a confidence in doing business in Ontario. That's what those investments mean. I could go on and on and on, but I want to give my friend from Thornhill an opportunity to put his views on the table.

**Mr. Mario G. Racco (Thornhill):** I want to thank the member from Peterborough for sharing the time with me. I want to assure him, this House and the people of Ontario that the prosperity he described in Peterborough is equalled, if not bettered, in my riding of Thornhill, where, since our election, we have opened the biggest mall in this province of Ontario, Vaughan Mills, where thousands of students have jobs, and where every day you see industrial building. I must also say to the Conservative side that the only area that went down is new housing, which is exactly what the people of Thornhill have been saying for years: "Slow down the housing, because we cannot afford to have that amount of housing in our community."

I'm pleased to be here as the member from Thornhill to lend support for last week's throne speech. The October 12th throne speech, appropriately entitled Strengthening Ontario's Economic Advantage, was well received by the majority of Thornhill residents. The key to Ontario's continued success was made clear: A prosperous Ontario is a successful Ontario. We are part of an Ontario that encourages and supports continued education, fosters innovation and promotes small businesses, while improving the health of our people. Our government is determined to consider all Ontarians, from students to teachers to seniors, and provide the necessary programs and funding.



**2050**

The results are in. We have seen progress over the past two years: higher test scores, shorter wait times and over 193,000 new jobs. In education, we have seen smaller class sizes and improved test scores. New textbooks and other learning resources are replacing worn, outdated textbooks. New library books will stock school shelves thanks to a \$61-million investment. Every school, regardless of size or geographic location, and every student will benefit from this investment. Our children will also see better conditions in which to learn. Our Good Places to Learn initiative will support school construction, facility repairs and renewal projects, which is worth \$4 billion over 3 years, which will benefit over 1.5 million kids.

New legislation is on its way making it mandatory for young people to keep learning until they are 18 years old. Also, a new alternative high school diploma will recognize the importance of learning a skill or trade. We are implementing our Reaching Higher plan for post-secondary education, which will invest \$6.2 billion more over five years in universities and colleges, apprenticeships and skilled programs. Our Best Start plan enables Ontario children to begin their school days fully prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

Children's health is a top priority for this government, as was demonstrated with the recent announcement of new funding for student nutrition programs and the implementation of a minimum of 20 minutes per day of physical activity in schools. I went to one of the local schools to make this announcement, because it is something I strongly believe in. These programs are a wonderful investment in our community and our children. In York region alone, 36 schools will receive a total of \$113,686 from the McGuinty government to go toward ensuring that children have proper nutrition.

As part of its commitment to the health and success of children and youth in Ontario, the government has nearly doubled its investment in nutrition programs, from \$4.5 million to \$8.5 million annually. More than 2,500 student nutrition programs across the province will receive funding. Under this revamped program, a healthy breakfast, lunch or snack will be provided each day to approximately 67,000 students in elementary and secondary schools.

In health, we have seen dramatic increases in the number of CT scans, cancer surgeries, cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures and hip and knee replacements. MRI scans continue to produce shorter wait times for patients, and of course York Central Hospital and Markham Stouffville Hospital are benefiting from this program. This means that the people of the region of York will enjoy shorter wait times and potentially improved prognosis of illnesses caught by MRIs in the early stages. Family health teams feature doctors working alongside other health professionals. The McGuinty government is improving patient care in York region by investing \$12.9 million for new and modern medical equipment in 27 long-term-care homes, as well as the three York region hospitals. The funding is part of the government's \$340-

million investment to update and increase diagnostics and medical equipment in hospitals and long-term-care homes across the province. Also, \$221,800 was given to York region hospitals to enhance infection control capacity to ensure that hospitals are better equipped to prevent and control infection rates.

We are focusing on protecting the health of Ontarians and we are investing in public health by combating smoking, requiring daily physical activity in our grade schools, introducing legislation to protect drinking water and reducing smog by replacing coal-fired electricity generation systems.

Our province is rich in diversity and welcomes the best and brightest from all over the world. My riding of Thornhill is in the region of York, which celebrates the fact that it is one of the most diverse areas in Ontario. At least 40% of us are new immigrants in Ontario. The government is expanding training programs in English-as-a-second-language instruction. Ontario will ensure timely access to professions and trades for qualified professionals trained outside of Canada by ensuring that regulatory bodies create a fair and transparent registration and appeals process.

The government's drive to form effective partnerships with the private sector and other levels of government includes less paperwork for small business, gas tax money for public transit, 1,000 more police officers on the street, the introduction of a new City of Toronto Act and legislation that would treat all municipalities with respect.

We are also looking into the future to ensure Ontario's place in the world market as a leader in innovation. Our government is boosting research and development while investing in key sectors, such as the auto industry.

We have not lost sight of the fundamentals. Ontarians have worked to reduce the provincial deficit from the \$5.6 billion that the Tories had left to \$1.6 billion, the last figure the Minister of Finance indicated. The province has launched a five-year, \$30-billion infrastructure investment plan, including roads, public transportation, hospitals and other infrastructure. This government is reducing traffic and greenhouse gas emissions by reaching an agreement with the federal and municipal governments to invest \$1 billion in GO Transit and \$150 million for Viva, the York region transit system. In York region we look forward to more investment in the eventual extension of the subway all the way to York University and, of course, into my riding of Thornhill and the Thornhill Corporate Centre.

In just two years, the government has created a plan to deliver a reliable supply of clean energy at a reasonable cost. Consumers can look forward to getting smart meters that will help them save money by telling them when they can pay less if they choose to.

The government will offer Ontarians the first public service money-back guarantee through changes to the birth certificate program.

This government remains committed to continuing our work and staying focused on what is important to the

people of Ontario. We have work to do, and we are here to listen to what our constituents have to say and address their issues.

One such issue is safety. In light of the series of shootings in the GTA, our government has taken the lead to keep our cities safe. From marijuana grow-ops to gang violence, this government is getting tough on crime. In addition to the commitment to hire 1,000 new officers across the province, hospitals are now required to report any gunshot wounds. We are appointing 29 new judges, 50 new crown attorneys and 56 new probation officers to help ensure that cases are dealt with effectively. We've established anti-gun and anti-gang units to make it easier for law enforcement agencies to work together to combat violence. We are not only getting tough on crime, but we are also providing alternatives for at-risk youths. Keeping kids in school is one way of keeping them off the streets. We are also investing \$1 million to fund five pre-apprenticeship training projects, helping approximately 100 youth. These programs are designed to give at-risk youth the opportunity to develop their skills and make the right choices in life. By investing in health, transportation, education and community safety, we are strengthening our communities.

To conclude, let me tell you that the economy is doing very well, and hopefully we will even be able to improve our performance. But one thing is clear: The people of Thornhill do not wish to see this government continue the deficit that the Tories left us. They want to see the deficit ended and potentially paid down—what the Tories accumulated in their nine years of administration. But at the same time, they also want to make sure that we pay enough taxes to make sure that the quality of life, such as health care, education, public transportation and so on, is kept at the level that Ontarians expect from this government. We are doing that. The throne speech indicated that. We are on the right track and I hope that the NDP in particular, and the Tories, will see the light and will support what we are doing, because it's the right thing to do.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments?  
2100

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** In the few moments I have, I'd like to just make a couple of comments with regard to the information that has just been given.

The member for Thornhill talked about a number of different topics, but I think one of the things that characterizes the throne speech that we're debating is the number of reannouncements that were present. I think that, historically, the notion of a throne speech is to be looking forward, and the idea of presenting a plan for the future, but even in many of the topics that the member opposite referred to there was a question of the reannouncements. I found a particularly good example in the question of community safety, where the member opposite refers once again to the 1,000 police officers, which of course was part of a platform commitment two years ago. I think that one of the characteristics of this throne speech, then, has been that question of reannouncing platform items from over two years ago.

The other thing is, of course, some very significant omissions. While going back to their platform on the issue of 1,000 police officers, they chose not to go back to the platform commitment with regard to autism. So there's no message of hope for the parents of autistic children who have reached the age of six, despite the fact that they have the pieces of paper in their hands, signed by the now Premier, establishing his commitment to follow through on that commitment.

**Ms. Horwath:** It's interesting to hear the honourable member talking about there being light and us needing to see the light. From my perspective, I see a great deal of darkness, and that darkness is named "Liberal" these days in Ontario.

Nonetheless, I find it interesting and actually quite galling to hear the talk about some of these accomplishments, when all you need to do is scratch the surface very lightly to see that they're either the same kinds of things that the previous government was doing, or in fact the accolades that the government is giving itself are not anything that's going to be realized in real life, by real people, in some cases for decades. In my riding, I think of Best Start specifically as a program that tends to get a lot of attention in terms of rhetoric. But in terms of actual on-the-ground changes for parents of young children today, those children will probably be well into grades 8, 9 and 10 before they come anywhere near getting access to affordable, licensed and qualified daycare for their children. Unfortunately, the government continues to spin and spin, but what they are not doing is providing on-the-ground solutions to the real problems that face people in Ontario.

You can brag all you want about things like this great economy. I got a letter today about some serious concerns that are happening in industry in Hamilton. Industry is suffering significantly because this government has refused to come up with a hydro policy that's decent, that's affordable for industry, that will maintain a decent manufacturing base in this province. Those are good, decent jobs that people are not going to be able to go to any more. Those are good, decent jobs that are not going to be there to support families, that are not going to be there to maintain a backbone of thriving communities. This government is failing miserably in that regard.

**Ms. Deborah Matthews (London North Centre):** First, let me congratulate the members for Peterborough and Thornhill, who once again have done an outstanding job representing their constituents.

I want to talk about Ontario, and in direct contrast to the previous speaker, I think there is an air of hope and optimism in this province that there hasn't been probably since the last time the Liberals were in government. Ontario is far better off today than it was just two years ago.

I've only got time to touch on a few things; I'm going to do my best.

Class sizes are smaller today than they were two years ago; 1,200 class sizes are smaller. We've got special ed. teachers in the classroom. Junk food is out and exercise is



in. We have peace and stability in the classrooms. We've frozen tuition for the last two years in post-secondary, and for the first time in 10 years, low-income post-secondary students are getting grants, not loans, to go to university and college.

On the health care front, we've got 69 family health teams, and 50 more coming this year. Wait times are finally being managed and coming down. We've got new and better hospitals coming across the province, including in my riding of London North Centre. More doctors are being trained, with twice as many spots for international medical graduates. That's real progress in two years.

On the social assistance front, what's closest to my heart: We have restored fairness and dignity. We have stopped treating our RESPs as assets so that people can save for their kids' education. We've stopped putting liens on people's homes. We restored the nutritional supplement for pregnant women. We allow kids to earn and save money without jeopardizing their social assistance. We've lowered the barriers to employment. We've reformed and simplified earnings exemptions, so the more you work, the better off you are. We've extended health benefits, after people leave, for six months to remove that barrier to employment. We've increased the maximum deduction for child care, and we have a new \$500 payment to recover the cost of work. We've done a lot in two years. Stick around for the next two.

**Mr. Hudak:** Certainly, if we've seen 50 broken promises in the first two years, I ain't looking forward to the next two, let me tell you. With all due respect to my colleague from London, whom I have great respect for—

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** No, you don't.

**Mr. Hudak:** I do, as well as my friend from Brant, whom I'm looking forward to spending some time with tomorrow.

Do you know what? I don't believe what you said. You've got a long list. Do you know why? Because if it came from Dalton McGuinty's pen, it ain't worth the paper it's written on. Never before have I seen a politician who has been equated with the "L" word like Dalton McGuinty. When you ask somebody—look at the SES survey—the first word that comes to mind when people hear the words "Dalton McGuinty" is "liar." It's the first word that comes to their mind in the SES survey.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'd like the member for Erie—Lincoln to withdraw that.

**Mr. Hudak:** Withdrawn, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** He's so eloquent.

**Mr. Hudak:** My friend from Eglinton—Lawrence taught me eloquence.

You'd think he'd be standing up on his feet and doing something about gun violence here in the city of Toronto. It was not even mentioned in this so-called throne speech. It was the summer of the gun, and all we heard from Dalton McGuinty was the summer of silence: not a word, not a plan, nothing in the throne speech. The member for Eglinton—Lawrence is quiet now because he

knows that his leader has no backbone when it comes to fighting crime. Some soft solutions—we've seen nothing come out of it. I heard the Attorney General talk about raiding the gun shops to make sure the guns are all locked away. This is akin to raiding pharmacies to fight a drug battle. I haven't seen these raids take place, despite his claims. His so-called amnesty for guns: no results from that. I'd much rather have seen the Premier stand up and fight crime, to actually demand tougher sentences, to say that this is wrong, to not stand for it, and to make it a highlight of the throne speech instead of—

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Peterborough has two minutes.

**Mr. Leal:** I want to thank the members from Thornhill, York North, Hamilton East, London North Centre and Erie—Lincoln for providing comments this evening. I think the Premier, the Attorney General and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services have been leaders in moving forward to deal with the gun situation here in Toronto.

I just want to read a letter I received:

"I was most pleased to read in the paper that several services have been increased, among them orthopaedic prostheses, cataract surgery and others. This change reflects the recognition by your government to respond to the truly needy in our society. I wish to thank you for your efforts in this regard."

Lena Powell, who is a constituent—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Excuse me. A point of order?

**Mr. Prue:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think that the member is reading from a prohibited device in this Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I didn't see it, but if that's the case, I'd certainly request that the member set it aside.

**Mr. Leal:** I just wanted to make sure that the members here got an opportunity to hear what people who go to Tim Hortons every day, who talk about issues of the day, think about some of the things that we're certainly doing in the fields of education and health care.

In the eulogy at his brother's funeral in 1968, Teddy Kennedy said, "Some people go around and ask the question, 'Why?' My brother went through the United States and said, 'Why not?'" That says a lot about this government. We're challenging the status quo. We're saying, "Why not?" to make changes in the health care system, "Why not?" to make changes in the education system and, "Why not make Ontario a better place to live, work and play?"

2110

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate.

**Mr. Hudak:** I appreciate the wrap-up comments of my colleague from Peterborough, who I always enjoy listening to. He referenced Teddy Kennedy and he talked a bit about John F. Kennedy as well. John F. Kennedy talked about building the shining city on the hill. That's what a throne speech really should be about. It should be the government's vision on how you're going to build that shining city on the hill. Instead, we had the most bland, vanilla, dull, lacklustre, meaningless piece of

puffery that I've ever seen in a throne speech. There was nothing there. We basically had 60 old warmed-over promises reannounced. We heard about a couple of Web sites and we heard about plans to hire lots more bureaucrats and expand the size of the civil service. But that vision of the shining city on the hill, what Dalton McGuinty wants to make the province of Ontario into down the road—nothing. Nothing compelling there. Nothing to sink your teeth into. It was about as exciting as leftover meatloaf.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Hudak:** I know my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs is heckling a bit there and I think I can understand the strategy, when you guys are there in cabinet: "Let's not make any waves. Let's just not cause any problems. Let's not make any controversial decisions that might actually cause some debate in this province and actually get us somewhere if implemented. Let's just go into quiet mode." That's what we saw in the throne speech—about as exciting as leftover meatloaf.

**Mr. Levac:** What do you have against meatloaf?

**Mr. Hudak:** It's just not exciting.

**Mr. Levac:** It is.

**Mr. Hudak:** Well, see, maybe that's why you're on that side of the House and I'm over here, because you think meatloaf is exciting. Then you'll like this—the Niagara Falls Review editorial of Friday October 14, 2005, I guess two days after this infamous throne speech: "McGuinty's Thin Menu Leaves That Hungry Feeling."

"With no real shining moment or truly memorable announcement in the speech"—not my words; those are the editorialists at the Niagara Falls Review—"Erie-Lincoln's Tim Hudak might be closer to the mark when he compares it to warmed-over meatloaf (though his wife might not like the comparison)." They go on to say, "But when a '15 days or free' offer to people who apply for birth certificates on-line is one of your highlights, you're working from a pretty thin script"—if that's one of the highlights.

**Mr. Levac:** Not if you need a birth certificate.

**Mr. Hudak:** But you know what? They want the birth certificate on-line on time. They don't want their money back; they want the birth certificate. Right now in the province of Ontario, in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario, it takes you longer to get a birth certificate than it does to have a baby. We're talking about people who have had birth certificates more than nine months delayed. But we're not here to debate the merits of the 15-day money-back guarantee. The main point I'm trying to make is this is pretty thin gruel. The Niagara Falls Review: "But when a '15 days or free' offer to people who apply for birth certificates on-line is one of your highlights, you're working from a pretty thin script."

It goes on, "No doubt, Dalton McGuinty's government was blindsided by the unfortunate timing of Treasurer Greg Sorbara's resignation (due to a criminal investigation of a company he is part owner of).

"But never mind the meatloaf—where was the meat?

"Ontario citizens would probably like to have heard more about what the government will do to reduce their tax burden, which numerous reports predict will get a lot more onerous in the next 12 months.

"There was little to dig into and really, little to feel invigorated about in the speech. Anyone hungry for more will have to make do with McGuinty's small serving."

This surprised me. I actually thought they would have something interesting in the throne speech, something bold. I thought there might be something of the vision thing that George H.W. Bush used to talk about. It wasn't there. You know what? I was actually thinking that Dalton McGuinty was going to throw out a bunch more promises there, and probably break or not get to in the next two years.

I think we'll remember the 2003 throne speech. We all met in this chamber in similar seats. My colleague Ms. Horwath was not with us at that time, but she probably heard that in the 2003 throne speech, as one of its main visions, its main promises to the province of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty said, "I will not raise your taxes," in the 2003 throne speech, and we know what happened to that. In fact, I think there were more than a dozen, close to two dozen, broken promises and unfulfilled commitments in that 2003 throne speech—not worth the paper it was written on. In fact, they should have just taken that throne speech from the chamber and put it on the fiction shelf of the local public library. It's closer to fiction than any semblance of reality.

That throne speech in 2003 said the government would offer affordable and reliable energy, reminiscent of their campaign commitment to freeze the price of power at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour. We all know what happened to that commitment: two big increases in hydro to date, with another big whack to the pocketbooks coming in early 2006.

**Mr. O'Toole:** That's actually a tax.

**Mr. Hudak:** My colleagues says it's actually a tax. Certainly, if you're a working family, a senior or a young person in the province of Ontario, that's more money coming out of your pocket, whether it's a tax or a hydro increase. You know what it is? About 28% has been the increase to date, despite Dalton McGuinty's solemn promise to the contrary, despite the energy minister's—now finance minister's—promise to the contrary. A 28% increase, and another whack is coming that is forecasted to be close to 30% in 2006—on top of that. Think about it.

People are going to have to deal with a significant increase in their home heating costs this winter. Whether you're on natural gas—we know the government panel approved a big increase for Enbridge; I think 125 bucks a year—or you're on oil or propane or certainly if you're still on electric heat, it's going to be a big burden on your pocketbook.

Also in the 2003 throne speech, the government made the old coal plant promise. Remember that one? That was a good one. They really got a lot of people there. Then we found out this summer, a year and a half after that



throne speech and that promise during the campaign, that the whole plan was off. They were no longer going to phase out the coal-fired plants by 2007 as promised.

Believe it or not, the 2003 throne speech said they would balance the budget. They talked about balancing the budget. What we have seen, just like the campaign, is that they promised to balance the budget each and every year, and it turns out that for each and every year of this government's mandate, they plan on running deficits, contrary to their campaign commitments.

The 2003 throne speech of the government said they would take a responsible approach to Ontario's finances, but then we saw four different estimates of the 2004-05 budget deficit. It was \$2.2 billion, then it went up to \$3 billion and at one point, \$6 billion. There's not a target they haven't missed. Now we have a new finance minister and we'll see if he's any better. But I suspect he'll have an even higher deficit figure than they finished with for 2004-05.

Here's another beauty: There will be no accounting tricks. That was in the 2003 throne speech in the fiction section of your local library. On March 18, 2005, the Provincial Auditor required Premier McGuinty to change accounting practices that would have counted long-term gains from power purchase agreements in one fiscal year. As a result, their budget numbers skyrocketed from \$2.2 billion to \$6 billion, a \$3.8-billion accounting trick. That's got to be Guinness; that's got to be hall of fame, a \$3.8-billion accounting trick caught red-handed by the Provincial Auditor.

They talked about the government hiring, not firing, more nurses. This promise was broken on September 25, 2005—actually, earlier. In January 2005, the health minister, Mr. Smitherman, provided hospitals with \$91 million, as an exclusive deal, to fire nurses in hospitals in the province of Ontario. That's not what they claimed. That's not what they said they were going to do. But \$91 million was earmarked for pink-slipping nurses in the province of Ontario. I needn't go on about that point. I think I've made my point.

**Mr. Lalonde:** Ninety-one million.

**Mr. Hudak:** Ninety-one million dollars. That's a lot of money. That's a lot of taxpayers' dollars. I can't do the calculation right now, but imagine how many taxpayers equate to \$91 million dollars. A city full of taxpayers, potentially; a town full of taxpayers. All of that money they put in from their hard-working paycheques is used to fire nurses, against what they said during the campaign and against what they said in the 2003 throne speech.

2120

Seeing that the campaign platform was tossed out, seeing that the 2003 throne speech is not worth the paper it was written on, I fully expected the 2005 throne speech to similarly be filled with all kinds of broken promises. That remains to be seen. What was surprising was the lack of any kind of vision whatsoever, the lack of any kind of bold agenda for the next two years. Instead, drift is all we're going to see in this chamber and in the province of Ontario.

Really, the only highlights that got any play on the radio, on television and in the media, when they weren't covering the finance minister's resignation, was this notion of the money-back guarantee for Ontarians who fill out birth certificates on-line. My colleague from Beaches-East York already talked about this and how it may not be an option for a lot of Ontarians. If you go to the Web site today, you can fill in an on-line birth certificate request and send it in electronically, if the request is for somebody who's eight or under. That's certainly helpful if you have young children, but I would think that the vast majority of Ontarians are nine and older and therefore wouldn't benefit from this. In fact, when we visited the Web site, we found it was down.

I do look forward to this. Hopefully, they'll do this, because my constituents want much better service than they're getting from this government on birth certificates and I do hope they get it in under the 15 days. But it will be curious to see how they handle security provisions as well in a day when security is a top concern and how electronically they'll be able to verify individuals and verify identification pieces. I suspect that this promise isn't going to be exactly the way they're characterizing it. I hope I'm proven wrong. My main point: It's pretty thin gruel.

The other thing that got any play at all was that the Drive Clean program would eliminate the waste of testing new cars. Now, I thought Drive Clean today didn't test any cars that were three years or under anyway. I think I'm right about that. So I don't know what they mean, exactly, by testing new cars. But you know what? This wasn't new news. The then environment minister, Ms. Dombrowsky, announced in March 2005 that she would review the Drive Clean program by the end of the year. There's two months to go, and maybe the new environment minister or her parliamentary assistant will do so. I'm not going to hold my breath. But the environment minister said she would review the Drive Clean program by the end of 2005, so it's not new. In fact, my recollection—and my colleagues can correct me if I'm wrong—is that when the program was created, I think back in 1996 by the then member for Guelph-Wellington, Brenda Elliott—

**Mr. O'Toole:** No, not really. It was created by the NDP as a pilot in north Toronto.

**Mr. Hudak:** I'm being corrected. Then I'm wrong, I guess. But the point I was going to make was that when Ms. Elliott was the Minister of the Environment and this Drive Clean program was launched, I think in 1996, or at least announced in 1996, I always thought there was a 10-year review period, that 2006 was supposed to be the review period anyway. Now, I may be wrong.

**Hon. Mr. Gerretsen:** You're wrong.

**Mr. Hudak:** The Minister of Municipal Affairs says I'm wrong, and maybe he'll stand up and prove me wrong. Nonetheless, it was announced, I think in 1996, and it was announced by Minister Dombrowsky in 2005 that the program was going to be reviewed anyway. So there's not much here. It's about as exciting as meatloaf.

I welcome my colleagues back after facing that shortage.

We did a little looking back in time to the 1995 throne speech, the Mike Harris government's first throne speech. I'll tell you what it had in it: bold initiatives to ensure a brighter future for Ontario. We promised to cut provincial income taxes, like we said we were going to do, and we did; to reform the Worker's Compensation Board; to scrap MPP pensions, to eliminate tax-free allowances and to take responsibility for setting MPPs' pay away from politicians; to reform the welfare system from a handout to a hand up; to reform the Ontario Human Rights Commission; to restore junior kindergarten as a local option; to ensure a demanding core curriculum; regular testing of students and standardized report cards—all bold initiatives at the time. They all created a lot of debate. I know not everybody liked those initiatives. Many here in the chamber argued against them, debated against them and voted against them, but they were implemented and a lot of them carry on. They caused debate in the province because there was a vision there, whether you liked it or not. I know my colleague from Beaches—East York had some criticisms earlier tonight, which I'll respect, but I think, in turn, he'll respect that there was a clear vision in the 1995 throne speech.

In the 1999 throne speech, Premier Harris promised a 20% personal income tax cut, putting more money in people's pockets for them to spend, save or invest; reach for the top scholarships; to renew, through the Super-Build growth fund, \$20-billion public-private partnerships for hospitals, roads and other infrastructure. It created a lot of debate at the time. Many members here entered that debate. It was a heated debate, but there was a vision, and these visions are abiding. The Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal's projects are not entirely different from what we did in SuperBuild. We called them 3Ps, you call them P3s, or vice versa; I'm not sure what the difference is. But there was a vision there. It was bold, and it's abiding.

I also worry a bit about what we're seeing with education standards in the province of Ontario. I thought my colleague Mr. Marchese, the member for Trinity-Spadina, made some good points in his response to the minister today, as my colleagues here on the Conservative side will do as well. The recent test results are questionable. Mr. Marchese raised some points that I think are worth investigating: unlimited time to answer questions, compared to time-limited exams in the past; tests were half as long. The tests last year went for over 10 hours, but only about six hours this year.

What I think people will find kind of amazing is that students were allowed to use calculators this year. Grade

3 and grade 6 students, in the math tests this year, used calculators for the entire test. That wasn't the case in previous years, so we're not exactly comparing apples to oranges.

**Hon. Mr. Gerretsen:** It should be apples to apples.

**Mr. Hudak:** No, we're not even close to apples and oranges. It's like apples to bowling balls. It's not even close. It's not even in the fruit family. I have nothing against apples. I like apples.

I should move on. I do have a concern about the dumbing-down of education standards by the Dalton McGuinty government, which I believe is purely politically motivated to try to get better test results, with great harm to the students of the province of Ontario.

I talked a bit about the guns earlier.

Here's a big concern: I cannot believe that in this throne speech there was not a single mention of one idea to help out hard-working families, seniors and young people in Ontario, who quite frankly are finding it more and more difficult to make ends meet in Dalton McGuinty's Ontario. Think about it. The new Dalton McGuinty health tax could take up to \$900 out of the pockets of working families. Electricity costs for the average home have gone up by \$180 per year, and prices are set to go up yet again in 2006. If you're on natural gas, natural gas costs are increasing by \$65 for the average house this year, and I think even more, fully annualized, in 2006. Gasoline costs are increasing by over \$600 for the average family this year. Annual eye exams now cost \$75, because effectively you privatized eye care and chiropractic care in the province of Ontario. You basically went two-tier: Those who can afford it pay for it, and those who can't no longer receive it. They do without.

This equates to approximately \$2,000 per year coming out of the pockets of working families in Ontario, and there was not one sentence, not one word, not one thought in the entire throne speech about giving some assistance, a bit of a break, to these hard-working families. I say shame on Dalton McGuinty and shame on his cabinet for ignoring this plight.

Now we're running out of time. We want to get more to the economy and the underlying concerns in the province of Ontario: 44,000 manufacturing jobs lost in this year alone. This is worrisome. Ontario's unemployment rate is above the national average for five months running. That hasn't happened in 60 years. It's a concern, and there was no attempt in the throne speech to turn it around—pretty thin gruel.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 9:30 of the clock, this House is adjourned until 10 of the clock Thursday, October 20.

*The House adjourned at 2130.*



# STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMITÉES PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE

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## CONTENTS

Wednesday 19 October 2005

### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

#### Throne speech debate, government

order number 1, *Mr. Crozier*

Mr. Marchese .....	203, 205
Mr. Berardinetti .....	205
Mr. Duguid .....	206
Mrs. Van Bommel .....	207, 210
Mr. Prue .....	208, 213, 215, 216, 219
Mr. Lalonde .....	209
Ms. Horwath .....	209, 214, 218, 222
Mr. McNeely .....	209
Mr. Arnott .....	210
Mr. O'Toole .....	212, 214, 218
Mr. Qadri .....	213
Mr. Flaherty .....	214
Mr. Patten .....	218
Mrs. Jeffrey .....	217
Mr. Leal .....	219, 223
Mr. Racco .....	220
Mrs. Munro .....	222
Ms. Matthews .....	222
Mr. Hudak .....	223
Debate deemed adjourned .....	226

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Mercredi 19 octobre 2005

### MOTIONS ÉMANANT DU GOUVERNEMENT

#### Débat sur le discours du trône,

ordre numéro 1 émanant du  
gouvernement, *M. Crozier*

M. Lalonde .....	209
Débat présumé ajourné .....	226





No. 7

N° 7

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Session, 38<sup>th</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième session, 38<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 20 October 2005

Jeudi 20 octobre 2005

Speaker  
Honourable Michael A. Brown

Président  
L'honorable Michael A. Brown

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 20 October 2005

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 20 octobre 2005

*The House met at 1000.  
Prayers.*

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### FOODLAND ONTARIO

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** I rise to move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should expand the Foodland Ontario program to explicitly state the standards Ontario foods meet before they are placed on the market and develop a campaign to educate the public on those food safety and quality standards.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Wynne has moved private member's notice of motion number 1.

Pursuant to standing order 96, Ms. Wynne, you have to up to 10 minutes.

**Ms. Wynne:** I rise enthusiastically today to speak to my resolution that we should, as a government, articulate the high standards observed by our farm community, our agri-food business, and to move then to educate the public on the benefits of those high standards. That, I believe, is our competitive advantage in Ontario.

This resolution is born of my conviction that all of us in this House, and in Parliaments across the country, must acknowledge the importance of agriculture to the well-being of Canada and must take direct action to improve the health of the agri-food industry.

There's a robust discussion, I acknowledge, between the agriculture sector and our Minister of Agriculture, our government. It's the stated goal of our ministry to improve the market returns of Ontario agriculture and food producers. In fact, we acknowledged in the throne speech of last week that we must work with the federal government to improve safety nets that support farm income, develop new branding and marketing strategies, and support research and development in agri-food.

Now, some of you may be wondering—as a downtown Toronto MPP, it may seem a bit of a stretch for me to be taking on this cause. Indeed, it would be easy to find many issues that, at first glance, have much more to do with the constituents of Don Valley West than the health of agriculture in Ontario. However, we all eat. Indeed, at the combined federal, provincial and municipal town hall meeting in my riding last week, the plight of

farmers and the state of our agri-food industry was not raised as an issue. But I believe that it is important, because all of us who live in this city already have access to safe, fresh food, and I would contend that we take that access completely for granted. Those of us who don't live near a rural community forget how our food is produced. I believe that the affluent among us, who have free access to this food, not only assume that we're going to have access to whatever food we want, but that we will have access whenever we want it. The expectation of strawberries in January, for example, is a world removed from the reality of our grandparents, who ate fruit and produce in season and in abundance, and then waited a full year to eat that produce again. We've moved very far away from that reality, and we assume that we can sustain that.

I believe that the Ontario farmers' Farmers Feed Cities campaign is a wake-up call to all of us who take our year-round abundance for granted. We take for granted that progressive, multi-billion dollar industry, and we assume that because it's in place, it will always be in place. We forget that it contributes to the health and well-being of Ontarians and to Ontario's economy, and that we need to support it, all of us across the province.

The other reason that it's critical for those of us in Toronto and in the GTA to pay attention to this issue is that we're living on some of the best agricultural land in the world. The GTA's geographic characteristics qualified as part of the 5% of the Canadian land mass that's classified as prime agricultural land, and a portion of that is part of the 0.5% of the Canadian land mass that qualifies as class 1 land under the Canada Land Inventory. There are over 34,700 jobs supported by GTA agriculture, with 4,621 farms producing over \$585 million in gross farm receipts. We have to remember that we're all here in this part of the country because of access to waterways and the abundance of great farmland. That's how we got here.

I just want to acknowledge Deb Lethbridge from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, who has joined us in the members' gallery. Thank you for being here.

So the health of our agri-food industry and the quality and safety of our food are as critical, if not as immediate, to a downtown Toronto MPP as they are to my rural colleagues.

Now, there are many issues surrounding this current situation in which Ontario farmers find themselves, and I'm not pretending to put myself out as an expert, nor do I speak for my colleagues in this Legislature who have

first-hand experience and vast knowledge of the needs of farmers and the solutions that we must embrace.

My colleague the member for Perth-Middlesex has attempted to educate those of us in the Liberal caucus for the past two years. He has organized a farm tour for our caucus in an attempt to bring the city mice to the country. I've attended both of those events, and I've had the privilege to see the complexity of modern farming. That's made it concrete to me that we all have to take action. The motivation for bringing this resolution came from that process of thinking, what can I do as a city member?

Paul Mistele, vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, points out in a recent speech that Ontario producers adhere to the highest production standards, that consumers want more information about their food, and that they want that information to be more specific. There are jurisdictions in western Europe where consumers can get extremely specific information about the fresh food they buy, including exact location of production.

I believe we should be doing everything we can to inform consumers about the vocabulary of food production. Does the average consumer know what's meant by terms such as "organic," "free-range," or "grain-fed"? What are the health and safety standards that must be met by Ontario farmers? How are those standards different, higher, than those in other jurisdictions?

#### 1010

In Korea there's an interesting program that started in 2003 called Rural-loving. It's a campaign to support the farmers, and trade federations, industry and business are all working together. Under the program, farmers commit to producing safe agricultural products and consumers commit to buying domestically produced goods. We have the farmers' half of that equation in place and I think we need to get the other half of the equation in place.

My colleague the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, who will speak shortly, is herself a farmer, and speaking in this House in May of this year she contended that consumers should not only prefer and demand Ontario products, but should understand why they want those products. That's what this resolution is about.

The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs on October 18, in answer to a question about food safety, talked about the HACCP program, the hazard analysis critical control points protocol. That allows us to know that our farm producers and food processors are following mandated safety procedures. The point here is that the general public doesn't know about these standards, doesn't know what farmers are doing and how the benefits of what the farmers are doing affect us.

There are, of course, people who believe we should be holding farmers to even higher standards regarding pesticides and so on. We can't even have that conversation, I believe, in the general public before we understand what the standards are now and what we're doing now. I'm looking for the education that would allow us to have that healthy debate. Paul Mistele, again, observes the govern-

ment's need to ensure that consumers get the information they need to make informed choices when buying food.

My prime motivation in bringing this resolution is my belief that a healthy farming culture is important to Ontario economically, socially, historically and environmentally. Our roots in central Canada are in the ground, in the fields tilled by our grandfathers and uncles, supported by their wives, sisters and daughters. Many of us come from families that worked on the land before they came to the cities and many of the newcomers to this country come from agrarian communities. There are community gardens all over this city because there are people who have come to this country who understand working on the land. Our connection to our history can be traced through the fields of corn and wheat and the fences and barns that have defined this countryside for seven or eight generations.

I believe that people who work on the land and who are dependent on it to at least some degree and who are dependent on the elements and who take responsibility for preserving the environment because their livelihood depends on it are people we should cherish and support.

I hope all of you will support my resolution to encourage the government to develop a way to help Ontarians to understand clearly the benefits of buying Ontario food, benefits that go beyond some sort of romantic sense of civic obligation, but benefits that are real to our health, the health of our children, the cohesion of the Ontario economy and the long-term sustainability of our environment. Ronald Wright, in his ominous *A Short History of Progress*, warns us, "If civilization is to survive, we must live on the interest—not on the capital—of nature."

I believe that in this particularly fertile corner of the world we inhabit it is our responsibility to preserve our natural environment, that it is our responsibility to preserve our farming capacity. To that end, we need to understand more about the food we eat, the challenges of the farming business and the complexity of the rural economy. We are all in this together. That's why my little, yellow city car has a licence frame that poses the Ontario Federation of Agriculture's question: "Did you eat today? Thank a farmer."

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr. Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant):** I wish to speak to this resolution on Foodland Ontario. I will reiterate that Ontario has an excellent reputation for producing safe and high-quality foods. OMAFRA's Foodland Ontario program already vigorously markets products aimed at not only increasing sales, but most importantly, increasing profits for fresh produce. They work closely with retailers and industry groups in developing the kind of multimedia strategies that are so important.

Make no mistake, Ontario foods do meet high standards and that message should be relayed to consumers. It seems like we're spinning our wheels a bit debating this resolution. There was an announcement at the plowing match a month or so ago. At that time, we in rural



Ontario were underwhelmed, if you will, and have no reason to see this resolution as maybe much more than a token gesture a month later. However, the estimates book—the estimates committee is sitting now—indicates that domestic recognition of the Foodland Ontario symbol will decrease by 8% in the coming year. This is reason for concern.

There are statistics out there that show that, on average, people across Canada are consuming fewer fresh vegetables than they were last year. In fact, vegetable consumption is now at its lowest level since 1992.

Art Smith, the CEO of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, wrote a public letter to Agriculture Minister Dombrowsky asking for Foodland Ontario to be enhanced:

"As you are aware, the Ontario fruit and vegetable industry is made up of over 125 different commodities with a total farm gate value in excess of \$1 billion. Many of the crops have some sort of regulated marketing system but the vast majority does not.

"The Foodland Ontario ... along with programs from both health and education should be used to educate people on the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables."

That connection, the poor eating habits—we know the story on obesity, diabetes and certain forms of cancer. In his letter he goes on, outlining the millions of dollars that are spent annually on health care costs and that much of that could be ameliorated or prevented through a better diet. As he says, "The benefits to all from healthy eating must not be overlooked and ... Foodland Ontario can play a critical role."

Just to put this morning's discussion in context, Craig Hunter, who is also with the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, indicates that we've had a bad year with many of the commodities. Weather has ruined thousands of acres through hail, drought, floods in some cases, disease and insect pressure. This is an ongoing problem for orchardmen. Late plantings have an obvious effect on yields. In the Niagara area, very low temperatures in the past winter really hammered the grape and tender fruit area. In some cases, we're seeing some of the lowest yields in over 30 years, although I can personally attest that the Porteus farm just north of me had excellent apples for sale. Apples did very well on many of their orchards and I brought some of those apples into this building this week.

Growers face a double-edged sword, not only harsh weather but the unfair trade game played across our border. There is another issue with respect to the United States. Oftentimes red tape, rules and regulations get in the way of farming. We certainly heard that from Ron Bonnett, with the OFA, at our meeting with John Tory at the plowing match.

Pesticide licensing, for example: The National Farmers Union indicated to us their concern that the Wayne Easter report not be shelved. There is one recommendation in the Easter report that I quote: "Harmonization of licensing and registration with the US on

pesticides." I hope the federal government goes forward on this, and Ontario has a role to support this kind of harmonization. This would apply to veterinary drugs as well.

I feel an awful lot of work needs to be done with respect to PMRA, the pest management regulatory agency. Our horticulture producers are in a very competitive environment. They are at a competitive disadvantage. They do not have access to the latest herbicides, insecticides and fungicides, and we suffer for that.

As we know, farmers in most sectors are in a crisis mode right now. They are looking to this government for some support on that risk management side. Our fruit and vegetable, our horticulture guys are losing SDRM, the self-directed risk management program. They have put together a replacement that's called self-directed production insurance, something endorsed by edible horticulture, by the OFA and by the Canadian federation. I hope the government will work with these farmers on this new production insurance program.

1020

I have a question from Adrian Huisman, again with the fruit and vegetable growers: Where is the provincial government on the tender fruit, apple and grape growers' revitalization plan? This is a plan—we see this in British Columbia—to assist orchardmen to haul out trees producing varieties of fruit that are not as popular with the consumer. It's a strategic replant program. The fruit and vegetable people have a \$300-million proposal before this government to be split three ways between the producers and the federal and provincial governments.

I want to mention a new organization that has been formed, the Fresh Vegetable Growers of Ontario, the FVGO. I look forward to their work. Their mission is the development, sale and export of our agricultural products. Their mission also includes education, the kind of consumer education that is so important, through Foodland Ontario. There are several members on the board—I'm very proud to say this—from my riding, including Mary Shabatura and Martin Streef, up north of Burford. The FVGO has been established as a not-for-profit association that looks after the specific needs of the unregulated vegetable producers, primarily the fresh market vegetables.

I leave this House with some questions. We have two other speakers on the docket this afternoon. Again, what about the availability of production insurance? What about plant disease, the health issues, that need for harmonization? New kinds of products are used south of the border, the newly researched and developed products for which there is such a delay for us to access. Why do our growers—our apple growers, for example—have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to attempt to get a fair NAFTA ruling on dumping? Again, there's that concern about the buying power consolidation at the retail level, which puts the farmer at quite a disadvantage. Many fruit and vegetables—certainly Niagara is very concerned about this government's greenbelt policy.

I'll just leave us with some words from Len Troup, president of fruit and vegetable. "For too long Ontario farmers have been seen as providers of cheap, safe, nutritious local food.... We have been taken for granted and managed by near monopolies that distribute and process our produce.... If society expects ... healthy food," all they're asking for is a healthier financial picture for their growers.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron-Bruce):** It's certainly my pleasure to rise today in support of the resolution that has been brought forward by the member for Don Valley West. When the member from Don Valley West talks about the fertile corner, it would behoove me to not talk about the fertile corner that I represent. As many of you have heard me speak, the riding I represent is the largest agricultural producer in the province of Ontario and alone produces more than three other provinces.

One thing I do want to say is that Foodland Ontario is a consumer branding program and it reinforces the advantages of buying fresh, quality Ontario-grown food. This resolution is asking that Foodland Ontario explicitly state the standards Ontario foods meet before they are placed on the market. I believe this is an excellent idea and that we should not only consider it but should adopt it.

For me, when we talk about Ontario product, that means buying my apples where I have always bought my apples, where my parents bought theirs and where my grandmother and grandfather bought theirs. For me, that's Ontario product. I buy my apples in the same place that I have—our family has lived in the Huron-Bruce area for seven generations—I guess for all those generations. We grew them for six generations; now we buy.

When I look at the meat that I eat, be it lamb, pork or chicken, I know where I'm buying all of that.

**Mr. John Wilkinson (Perth-Middlesex):** And beef.

**Mrs. Mitchell:** Yes, and my beef; I know where it comes from.

For me, that's local product; that's Ontario product. When we come from a rural area, that's our understanding of what the local product is. So when I walk through the grocery stores in Toronto, it must be very difficult to understand where that food comes from; not only that, but to also understand what goes into growing that product. This is one way of overcoming that, and with the understanding that people know what they are buying when they buy Ontario.

One of the ways that we can assist farmers is to promote the excellent, high-quality food they produce on a daily basis. That's very important. We must remind people in this province and around the world where our food comes from. We also need to let them know of the very strict food standards that are applied, and the Foodland Ontario brand should bring it to mind. When we see the Ontario brand, we should understand what that stands for. If there is standardization, then people know that's what they are buying.

This government has taken a number of measures to enforce food quality and safety in this province. Justice

Haines was asked to report on Ontario's meat regulation and inspection. As a result, he has made recommendations, and this government is following through on them. We have hired 61 more full-time meat inspectors and 58 part-time inspectors in June 2004. We introduced a new food safety system for small and medium-sized food processing plants in Ontario. We also announced a new food safety research program that is designed to enhance the safety of food that is produced and processed in Ontario.

I think this resolution gives us a wonderful opportunity to promote these initiatives through an already well-established Foodland Ontario program.

The member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex brought forward a resolution in the last session that the government of Ontario should promote a framework for the promotion of Ontario-grown goods. I also supported that resolution. It's important for us to always remember that food produced in Ontario comes from very hard-working people who are excellent stewards of the land. When people purchase goods and see the Foodland sign, they should know automatically: highest quality, safest food produced in the world. Goods produced in Ontario are the best in the world, and I think it's time that it was recognized. Farmers and people in rural communities spend many hours in a day working to give us our food. We as a government should not only support them, but have the tools to help them promote their products.

If you ate Ontario food today, the agricultural community thanks you.

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** It's a pleasure to join in the debate today. I commend the member from Don Valley West for introducing this motion today—I wish it was more into legislation, but I hope that's coming down the road—and recognize that an urban member and the Liberal government, which is predominantly urban members, are beginning to look at the fact that farmers feed cities. She recognized the campaign going on out there.

I have a farmer in my riding who always tells me that people in the city don't understand where food comes from and the importance of it until they have to eat their carpet. So I will bring this to his attention, that we have been debating this today.

We can never lose the ability to feed ourselves, and there is a huge education component involved here in educating the people, especially in the cities, about the importance of growing our own food. The fact is that farmers in Ontario have been in a crisis for two and a half years now; the farms are closing down as we speak. So action is needed now.

Foodland Ontario, a program under the Bill Davis government, was brought in in 1977. This program, the Foodland Ontario ad campaign, is a reannouncement. As my colleague for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant had mentioned, it was reintroduced at the plowing match. But it's encouraging. We support Foodland Ontario, but we're concerned they don't have the resources or funding to



address these new duties. We need to impress here that we need to do more to promote Ontario-grown produce.

1030

In my riding of Haliburton–Victoria–Brock, Kawartha Farm Fresh continues to connect and liaise among the local farmers, branding and labelling. The city of Kawartha Lakes has \$73 million of farm gate sales annually, and it's the third-largest agriculture employer in the province.

The member from Peterborough rightly recognized the Kawartha Choice Farmland Food works and that they received an award in September in Prince Edward Island at the chamber of commerce annual meeting. The Kawartha Choice Farmland Food initiatives, in competition with all communities, took home the gold in the national award for leadership. So I highly commend them for that local initiative. I think the whole province can learn from that initiative and their award.

We've been speaking a lot with agriculture reps in our area, and I just wanted to mention a few of their comments. Joe Hickson, Dale Mountjoy and Dave Frew from the grain and oilseed producers say they need restoration of funding in the provincial budget to agriculture and restoration of agriculture as a priority ministry. It used to be that health, agriculture and education were the three most important ministries. We see agriculture slipping and farmers must not be expected to continue subsidizing the cost of food production.

The fruit and vegetable growers, Charles Stevens and Ted Watson, say there's a need for more provincial support for agriculture in the areas of research and development, consultation with farmers, and promotion of locally grown fruits and vegetables as essential to health.

From the municipalities: When farmers embark on value-added enterprises—for example, the roadside markets—they should not face higher taxation and red tape. There should be greater promotion of Ontario food, including larger logos on Ontario-grown produce, and Ontario content rules that require more Ontario products to be made available in stores.

I'm happy to see the motion today. I encourage the government to put legislation in place so that this can be taken further and that Ontario produce and products can be more visibly seen in stores and we can have more education to buy locally grown.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** It's a pleasure for me to speak this morning on this motion put forward by my good friend and colleague from Don Valley West, who has been a real advocate among urban members to really push forward the "farmers feed cities" concept. I commend her for that leadership.

Some time ago, when I was a young lad, I remember being at an agriculture forum in Peterborough. The Hon. Eugene Whalen was there in his role as the federal Minister of Agriculture. I remember a lady at the back asking a question of Mr. Whalen. She said, "Mr. Whalen, I'm concerned about the price of Florida orange juice." Well, we know Mr. Whalen. He adjusted the green Stetson slightly and made his response to that lady. He

suggested to her that a good substitute for Florida orange juice, at a cheaper price with better quality, was tomato juice processed from those tomatoes grown, Mr. Speaker, in your riding, in Leamington in Essex and processed at H.J. Heinz.

There's a real moral in the answer Mr. Whalen provided that day, that Ontario-grown produce, whether it's fruits or vegetables, or cattle, lamb and chicken, is of a quality that is the best in the world. We have to take our time to keep promoting that concept, that Ontario-grown fruits and vegetables and meat are the best in the world.

My colleague from Haliburton–Victoria–Brock touched upon the Kawartha Choice program, which was an initiative of the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce. It came out of the mad cow crisis, in that we had to go back and start rebranding and promoting locally grown produce and meats in the Peterborough area to reinforce the activity that goes on from Foodland Ontario. It has been a very successful program, recently winning the gold star award at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce annual event in Prince Edward Island.

I had an opportunity just recently, in my role as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, to meet with the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors. I think they have a great role and they're prepared to take on that role to promote Ontario-grown food. I just want to read from a note, as my time ticks down:

"Supporting Ontario-grown and healthy active living for Ontarians:

"We have several success stories in supporting Ontario- and Canadian-grown products and our members will be open to any proposal from an Ontario-based manufacturer or producer who wishes to supply products to our stores. Our presentation provided a high-level overview of these initiatives and the opportunity areas. We would be happy to speak with you" and your government further to promote those initiatives.

I think there's a wide net of individuals out there who are prepared to push forward with this initiative to provide Ontario-grown produce and foods every day to the plates of Ontarians.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? The member for Toronto–Danforth.

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto–Danforth):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I think it's time we got a New Democratic voice in here.

I'm pleased to be here today to speak not just for myself, although it's private members' hour, but on behalf of New Democrats in support of this resolution and to talk a little bit about the issues facing the agricultural and farming communities today. Ms. Wynne, when she first introduced the motion, talked about the fact that it might seem a little strange that a city person is concerned about this issue, but as she said, we all have to eat and we all want to make sure that our food, and particularly our children's and our grandchildren's food, is safe to eat and that people are aware of safety concerns

but also of the quality standards. Certainly, who wouldn't support a resolution like this?

I also have to say, and I repeat this frequently in the House when we are talking about agricultural issues, that although I represent a downtown Toronto riding, I'm from Newfoundland and Labrador. I saw the tragedy of what happened in Newfoundland when the fish disappeared. I relate that story again, because when I was on committee traveling around this province, particularly around the greenbelt but on other issues as well, one of the things that the committee heard time and time again from the farm community, and particularly from the family farm, is that they see themselves at risk of disappearing, for all kinds of reasons that we're all aware of and don't have time to go into here today. Of course this motion is not about that, but I think it's important to set the table, to remind people that there are many, many issues, that I know we all have been trying to deal with in various ways, to save the family farm, because it's so important to our economy.

I do want to say that the sustainability of what Mrs. Wynne is proposing today does depend upon there being Ontario crops and markets for them. Last year, while on the greenbelt committee hearings—as you know, I've always supported the greenbelt and will continue to support the greenbelt, and at the same time will continue to talk to the government about my concerns around that greenbelt. We heard from a lot of farmers that large, large swaths of prime agricultural land, even more valuable than most of the farmlands that are being saved, were left out of the greenbelt. There were great concerns expressed about that and how the lines were drawn. But during the greenbelt committee hearings, we heard that protecting farmland is one part of the solution but that ensuring that Ontario farmers have a local market is equally important. The committee heard extensively from the agricultural community about the very difficult economic times they're confronted with right now. We heard time and time again that, with or without the greenbelt, these issues are there. They brought up all kinds of things: BSE, low commodity prices, US farmers dumping corn into Ontario markets at a fraction of the production cost. It was underscored that the crisis in the farming community is happening and that the government needs to take action.

#### 1040

I'm pleased to say that there are times when we all do work together on important issues. I did put forward an amendment in the greenbelt committee that called for sustaining the economic viability of farming communities as part of the greenbelt, and I'm pleased to say that it passed. I'm really looking forward to that being enacted, because it hasn't been, months after it was passed.

These are the kinds of things we need to see the government address: the farm income crisis that's gripping rural Ontario, the farm income crisis that has spread into the farm supply sector, which is now carrying an increasing proportion of farm debt. I know there are issues around the trade agreement that we hear about, but

we have to stop hiding behind that and get provincial programs in place, like Quebec has done, that return Ontario farmers their costs of production. We all know about these issues. I know I'm painting a big picture here, but this resolution is an important part of this big picture. We have to look at the big picture to make sure that this works.

Another point I want to make—I mean, I'm not going to make an amendment, as it is a private member's bill, but it's a big issue with me as an environment critic: the concerns I have around GMO foods. I would have liked to have seen the expansion of this to include full disclosure about GMO foods, things like what the standards are, the research used in making decisions around GMO foods, if that research has been peer reviewed, disclosure that the current available research about GE foods does not currently include studies that look at how consuming GE food impacts people's health over the long term. I say this because it's an issue that has been generally ignored. We all do talk about the fact that there are some real benefits to genetically modified foods in terms of feeding a starving world, in some of the developing countries. We do look at some of the positive impacts of that, but when you have the Royal Society of Canada and its peer organization in the UK, Greenpeace, the Environmental Protection Agency, the World Health Organization, joined by New Democrats at the federal level and here—in fact, it was part of our New Democratic platform provincially in the last election. There have been many groups advocating for comprehensive, independent, long-term research, which needs to be conducted to learn what the health risks associated with eating GE foods are, particularly among child-bearing women, infants and children.

The Royal Society of Canada and the Ontario Public Health Association have strongly criticized the lack of regulations around GE foods and how the studies that are used in making decisions about it are from biotechnology firms. Some of the data and the studies may be quite legitimate and the results legitimate, but nobody can argue that they have a vested interest, and we do need to see some independent studies. There have been many calls for establishing an independent, transparent research capacity to study bioengineered foods.

Public opinion expresses similar sentiments as these bodies. They want to know if the produce on the shelf or bin has been modified. A recent poll found that 50% of Canadians are concerned about the potential dangers of eating GE foods.

I know that it's not included in this, and I'm still supporting the motion. I understand how private members' bills and motions are done; you can't do the whole package, and this of course is an important component. But I wanted to raise some of these issues, because I do think they're really important. This gives me an opportunity to talk a bit about it, because we don't talk very much about the implications of this.

I want to tell you, for instance, what the World Health Organization said: "Attention should be paid to the



particular physiological characteristics and metabolic requirements of specific population subgroups such as infants, children, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly and those with chronic diseases or compromised immune systems."

The Royal Society of Canada said, "Early introduction of these (peanut, tree nuts, seafood and seeds) and other food proteins to the infant's relatively immature immune system may encourage development of an allergy. Infants and young children therefore appear to be more susceptible to developing food allergies, resulting in a higher incidence."

The Canadian government has been severely criticized for GE food safety regulations by numerous authorities, including the Royal Society of Canada and many others. So we have a lot of work to do on that.

As well, I would like to talk just for a moment about the issue of pesticides. I believe that it is an issue and we do need to have that debate now—we do. I know it's a contentious issue within the agriculture and farming community. There are organic farmers, there are farmers who are trying to keep genetically engineered foods out of their crop areas, and there are all kinds of issues around that. But in terms of pesticides—and a Conservative member mentioned it—there are safer technologies and pesticides that our farmers do not or may not have access to. That is an area, again, where research shows more and more—we talk about imported strawberries, for instance. Strawberries, as I understand from what I've read, are one of the highest pesticide-laden fruits, berries or foods available in the marketplace. We've all learned, hopefully—and part of the education should be around washing our foods carefully before eating them or digesting them, to get as much of the pesticide residue off. But we know that some of the safety precautions and quality standards are not as high in other jurisdictions as they are here. That's something that has to be dealt with in an international marketplace, and I understand that, but nonetheless, I think it behooves us, as the Ontario government, to make sure that education is provided more than it is now so that parents are aware that they need to wash foods. Sometimes it's recommended with certain types of foods that you wash them in mild, soapy water.

Those are the kinds of issues we have to be concerned about now, because there are so many pesticides, so many fungicides, so many newer processes that I think farmers would be quite willing to use if it was economically viable and the regulations and regime were put in place that would make it easier for them to do that. There's more and more evidence that some of the pesticides that are used are having a very negative effect, particularly on our children.

When the NDP was in government, Ruth Grier, who was the Minister of the Environment and then the Minister of Health, commissioned a study while Minister of the Environment on cancer prevention. I know Ms. Grier is still extremely involved and dedicated to that issue although she's no longer a member in this place.

One of the components of that report talked about the impact and the connection between our environment, the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat, and the pesticides that are often in that food. Those are the kinds of things that we're seeing more and more evidence of.

The city of Toronto recently banned pesticide use on our lawns in the city. It's very controversial and it's not being very well enforced at this point, but it's a start. I think that's an important step forward.

1050

I understand, as I stand here talking about this, that farmers need to be in a position to compete with the US. There really are some unfair trade actions being taken, and I recognize that. I know that farmers have to do whatever they have to do to be able to compete in this marketplace. But there are all kinds of things that we can do as a government to deal with the economic crisis they're in and also to help them bring in the latest and best technologies in terms of the best practices for growing our fruits and vegetables.

With that, I would say to the member that, as a fellow city MPP in this place who understands the importance of the viability of our farmers and the food we eat, I support the resolution before us today and would like the opportunity to further it and deal with some of those other issues that I raised today in a more direct way.

**Mr. Frank Klees (Oak Ridges):** I only have a minute and a half left, so I want to place on the record an item of concern regarding agriculture in Ontario. I have a letter here from a constituent, Mr. John Doner, who is a farmer in Gormley. From his letter, I quote:

"Our provincial Premier has led us to believe that agriculture would become a lead ministry under Ontario's current Liberal government. And yet support levels for the industry have in fact been cut, and additional costly legislation (greenbelt, nutrient management, etc.) has been passed that farmers must comply with."

He goes on to say, "When will a grain farmer (for instance) be able to expect a fair return for their labour, risk and investment?"

He closes by saying, "With little to no returns to entice younger generations to begin farming, our governments should be concerned with the future sustainability of the nation's domestic food supply."

The reality is that we can talk about marketing food as much as we want, and in that regard we obviously support whatever initiatives are necessary to do that to help our agri-food industry, but at the end of the day we won't have farmers if in fact this government does not see agriculture and conduct itself in a way to demonstrate a priority for the agri-food industry in this province. It is not doing that, it is falling down on the job, and agriculture in this province is at risk because of that.

**Ms. Jennifer F. Mossop (Stoney Creek):** It is my pleasure to speak this morning to support this resolution that's been brought forward by the member for Don Valley West. I think I will skip ahead a little bit and

address a couple of the things that have just been mentioned by the member opposite.

This government supports its farmers and its agricultural community in a very meaningful way, in good times and in tough times—and very tough times recently. Just last year, there were some real challenges facing our farming community. There was \$549 million dedicated to our agricultural budget. We spent an additional \$628 million or more to support our farmers in crisis. In addition, our Premier met with the farming community. There was an agri-food summit. We responded directly to the concerns of farmers by restoring our research stations, by working with them in many areas and, may I add, by beefing up our Foodland Ontario ads—and let's get to that subject, because that's what we're here to talk about.

Foodland Ontario is a symbol that has become synonymous with freshness and excellence in food for a number of decades now. This year, we actually added a component, because we realized that times have changed and not every consumer out there actually knows how to handle fresh food. It used to be that we all took home ec—at least, all the females would take home ec, and the females were the ones who were doing the shopping—and we knew from our home ec classes what we were supposed to do with our food. But that's not the case any more. It is not standard that everybody knows that you should not put your tomatoes in the fridge because they won't taste as good—they really won't—or that you shouldn't soak your mushrooms. Not everybody knows that. So we added this feature to our Foodland Ontario ads this year to help educate our consumers about how to handle fresh food.

The other thing that a lot of people don't realize is that it used to be you'd wait all year long so you could have strawberries for maybe two weeks and you'd wait all year long so you could have wonderful fresh tomatoes for maybe three or four weeks. Well, now you can get these things all year round. Fresh Ontario tomatoes happen all year because we have greenhouses. Our agricultural community has changed, and our support of it has changed along with it.

Interestingly enough, we know by our senses that Ontario food is best. We know because we taste its freshness; we taste that it is best. We know through sheer common sense that we live in a corner of the world where high standards are a priority and where we can readily have this food. We know by common sense and by our senses that Ontario food is the best. But we are a society and a species—more so a society—that needs things empirically; we need to see it in black and white. When the consumer is reaching out for that piece of fruit and maybe has a choice between something imported and something from Ontario, they know intuitively that the apple from Ontario is going to taste better and be fresher and will have met a certain standard. But we, as a species, just seem to need to know these things in an empirical way in black and white. So our Foodland Ontario

symbol should go that extra step to spell out and recognize the high standard that Ontario food meets.

I want to talk a little bit about just how lucky we are in this corner of the planet. Quite frankly, I think everybody should be dropped by parachute into a Third World country, where growing food is nigh impossible, and then come back here. Your view of the world will have changed, and your view of your corner of the world will have changed so much.

We have the ability to grow our own food. We have the ability to grow excellent food and a wide range of food. That doesn't happen everywhere on the planet. We recognize that as a government; we need to recognize it more as a society. It is why we put the greenbelt in place; you cannot grow wonderful food if you don't have the land to grow it. So we have our greenbelt; we have been supporting our farmers, and will continue to do so, and work with them in a meaningful way; and we have our Foodland Ontario ads, which educate the public and celebrate the fabulous food we have. Bon appétit.

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** I want to thank my colleague from Don Valley West for bringing this motion forward. I know that when I stand up, everyone expects me to talk about farming and agriculture. But to have it come from an urban member, and to have her use her time as a private member to push forward that cause, gives it more impact, I feel. I certainly know that she brings a different voice and very important voice to this.

Ontario food is nutritious, safe and plentiful. As farmers, we need to promote those products and those qualities to our consumers. We need to make the linkage between what happens on our farms and what our consumers know about what's happening there.

Consumers have a great deal of power: They have the power to change their consumption habit; they have the power to change their buying habits; they have the power to change the buying procedures of their retailers. In all of that, of course, they have the power to increase farmers' incomes. Consumers also have the power to influence food production through what they buy and how they influence their retailers. They have that, and they need to use it wisely and be completely informed.

That is what we are trying to do under this motion. We want to make sure that a consumer goes into the grocery store, picks up a product, knows that it's an Ontario product and knows how that is different from anything else on the shelves. They can make those decisions; they can decide whether they want to buy a GMO product or not, if they know that's what happened there. At this point, most consumers have no idea where their food has been or where it comes from, and we want to have that happen.

1100

**The Deputy Speaker:** The member for Don Valley West has two minutes to reply.

**Ms. Wynne:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all the members from all parties who have spoken to this resolution this morning.



I just want to follow up on something that the member for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex talked about: the power of the consumer. That really is what I am talking about in this resolution. Because consumers have a lot of power, they need to have information, and we need to make sure that consumers get that information.

The member for Toronto-Danforth illustrated the point I made in my remarks about the possibility of the extension of the debate, and I understand that there are people who want to go into a much broader debate about food safety and so on. I commend that and think it's a necessary thing to do, but we have to start from a base of information. Until we have that base of information and people understand all the great things that are happening now—we do have such a safe food base in this province, and until we understand just how safe it is, we really can't have that larger debate. I think that's what we need to strive for: getting that informed base. There's nothing worse than a debate that is fed by ignorance and panic.

On that note, there's timeliness to this discussion. Every day in the newspaper we're reading about the importance of food safety. When we talk about avian flu, we're talking about the way food is handled, the way food is produced. In Ontario, we have the capacity to be leaders in the world. Let's make sure that all the residents of Ontario understand what our farmers are doing. Let's promote that among ourselves, and then we can promote it in the world.

### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri (Etobicoke North):** I move that in the opinion of this House, the government of the Ontario should urgently address the issue of violence, gang-related crime and the illegal use of firearms—as a matter of public safety and responsible government—by being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Qaadri has moved private member's of notice of motion 2. Pursuant to standing order 96, you have up to 10 minutes.

**Mr. Qaadri:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you're aware, this issue is urgent, pressing and important. To highlight this, as members will recall, just yesterday I had the honour, duty and privilege of welcoming to this House, and asking you all to recognize, Mr. Mohammed Gilao, the father of a 23-year-old individual, Mr. Loyan Gilao, who was gunned down in the prime of his life. Mr. Gilao was accompanied by a number of family members, including his sister, and other supporters and one individual whom I've come to respect and know a great deal, Pastor Walter McIntyre. Pastor McIntyre has actually taken the trouble of itemizing and writing for me, I guess you could say, a kind of letter, but maybe it's almost a literary story, about violence to do with my riding of Etobicoke North. I'd like to enter that into the record.

I begin as follows: "Jamestown in north Etobicoke has been in the news a lot over the past few summers. Drugs,

gangs and drive-by shootings are a part of what our kids grow up with in Jamestown. A summer evening. There's an outdoor party on someone's front lawn. The news gets out that someone who owes a debt is at that party. And a car with tinted windows pulls to a stop. A window rolls down and there's a gun.

"That's just how it happened on August 3. Fifty Jamestown Crescent. Ten gunshots. And a 23-year-old lay dead in front of Greenholme school.

"I was behind Greenholme school. On the basketball courts. Overseeing the play of a group of about 30 children. It was about 8:30 in the evening. Ten shots. The kids said they were afraid. They wanted to go home. So we broke off play a little early.

"The neighbourhood was spinning with red and white flashing lights. The air was filled with sounds of sirens, police cars, ambulances, emergency vehicles, fire trucks.

"And the kids, five, six, seven, eight years old, some still holding basketballs, slipped under the yellow police tape and went home. No counselling ... nothing.

"That's just how it is in Jamestown, Etobicoke North. That's home. That's life. I worry that it seems so normal to the kids.

"It doesn't have to be that way. If we roll up our sleeves and work together ... we can make a difference."

"Actually, over the past couple of years we have made a difference in Jamestown. Because—at least in part—of the work of organizations such as the Etobicoke Strategy, a group consisting of faith leaders and police working together, the incidence of violent crime, in spite of August 3, has actually been driven down.

"Legislation recently enacted by the province has helped.

"It is now more affordable for churches and community groups to rent school gymnasiums and playgrounds. Like at Greenholme. That decision put billions of dollars of real estate to work in the fight against crime.

"And summer jobs are now available for young people in places like Jamestown. That brought genuine hope. Taxpayers' money well spent.

"Much remains to be done. Please know that there are many people praying for you all as you all work to create the good laws that we will need to take the guns off our streets."

That's signed,

"Many blessings

"Pastor Walter McIntyre

"Outreach Pastor, Kipling Avenue Baptist Church."

Not only would I like to recognize the sentiment that has driven Pastor McIntyre to compose that piece, I would like, in our future deliberations here, to honour his wishes. We, as a government, in this Legislature, must work together using all the various measures at our disposal, whether we're dealing with gangs, which now number, I'm told, more than 200 in the city; whether we're dealing with the number of homicides, which are now approaching 100 in the city of Toronto; helping to empower police, whether it's by increasing the number of officers who walk the streets of Toronto; whether it's

organizing particular task forces that are specifically designated to deal with things such as gangs or guns or organized crime; whether it's empowering our legal system regarding, say, sentencing or having dedicated crown prosecutors or mandatory gun reporting; and, of course, working in concert with our federal colleagues to enhance things like border security, therefore hoping to stem the tide of the illegal flow of firearms.

Along with being tough on crime, we, as Liberals, as people who are hopefully moving toward a just society, to echo the phrase of the great statesman Pierre Elliott Trudeau, we must also engage our youth and engage communities to offer them hope and a way out and avenues in which they will realize that violence is not the only pathway, the only answer to their needs.

We have, for example, engaged with the police services in a number of projects that have been very, very successful; for example, projects Impact, Pathfinder and Flicker. Ron Taverner, 23 division superintendent, by whom I had a recent briefing, talked to me about an eight-month project, Project Flicker, in which hundreds of police officers were involved with an investigation of more than 200 gang members, particularly based in Rexdale and the surroundings. Very recently, we had multiple arrests made in Etobicoke and surrounding locations. I would like to congratulate Police Superintendent Ron Taverner and, by extension, Chief of Police Bill Blair, on these types of initiatives, because we need to get at the sources of organized and criminal violence.

We must, as well, empower police. I'm pleased to say that here in the McGuinty government we have made some initial steps on, for example, empowering police not only with the task forces that I mentioned earlier, but also with new police divisions, which are arising as we speak, particularly in my own riding at Kipling and Albion, and also, of course, the funding allocation, close to \$40 million, for 1,000 new police officers. This is certainly welcome, it's needed, I might say it's overdue, and it's something that will, no doubt, positively affect the level of violence across Toronto.

1110

One of the questions I asked, had put on the record, to the Attorney General yesterday was regarding the legal system. One of the complaints I have heard from residents, from the victims' families and from the police services is that for too long under the previous administrations in this province, there seems to have been the revolving-door effect, meaning that individuals who are picked up for particular crimes, be they violent or gun-related, drug-related, mere theft, seemed to be able to get back on the street without too much restraint. There was, for example, recently in Etobicoke, reference to an individual who I believe I cannot name but who nevertheless actually had accumulated more than 200 criminal charges and yet was still able to post repeated and serial and never-ending bail to be back on the streets. Of course, the police officer with whom I was discussing this was a little bit despondent and a little bit disheart-

ened that if the police actually go and make the arrest, with proper accumulation of evidence to be brought forth in a trial, why is it that these types of individuals cannot be stopped? That's why we had, from the Attorney General, commitment to deal with this particular area.

I'm pleased to be able to share this resolution with other individuals from my caucus, particularly those who feel strongly about this issue, and they are MPPs Brad Duguid from Scarborough Centre, Kathleen Wynne from Don Valley West, Tony Wong from Markham, and Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti from Scarborough Southwest.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Dr. Martin Luther King, who spoke against violence and embodied some of the best traditions that we may learn from. He said, "Cowardice asks the question: Is it safe? Expediency asks the question: Is it politic? Vanity asks the question: Is it popular? But conscience asks the question: Is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic nor popular; but one must take it because it is right."

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** I am very pleased to be able to take part in the debate this morning on this private member's bill. I want first of all to say that our caucus of course will be supporting this resolution. I do want to congratulate him and the members of his caucus who he has mentioned will be supporting this bill as well. I certainly hope this sends a strong message to your two justice ministries.

This has been one of the most horrifying years in the history of the province of Ontario, particularly in relation to the city of Toronto, in gun violence and gang violence. It appears that very little is being done as we speak. It appears that the government—of course, the member is a member of the government—has done very little. Mr. Kwinter is the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, whom we can refer to as the top cop in the province. It seems there has been very little action on this particular issue. I know that our own leader, from August 1 on—and that has nothing to do with all the resolutions and all the press releases he had put out prior to that. Fourteen times since August 1, John Tory has called for action on illegal guns in the province of Ontario, and he's called for tougher sentences and input and leadership from our two justice ministries on this issue. What we've seen, really, is not a lot.

We're talking now about the parole board, and I know that Minister Kwinter says they're reviewing the parole board issue on whether or not to turn it over to the same people who allow their parolees to go to Wonderland. That's what came up the other day from the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. I know that Mr. Kwinter says he's got that particular file under review. What is disturbing is that we've learned in our caucus that existing members of the Ontario parole board have already been asked for interviews. The National Parole Board is interviewing them for positions.

We understand—and I hope this is wrong, to the members of the government—that in this particular issue, the legislation is prepared and the regulations are prepared,



so the government can actually introduce the bill this fall and have it passed in time for the end of the year, which would of course be March 31 of next year. That's how far we understand this file has gone, and yet the minister stands in the House day after day, saying, "No, we're reviewing it and no decisions have been made." I sure hope I'm wrong in the accusation I'm making here today, because I think it would be a terrible move to allow even more people onto streets under what we would call the soft-on-crime federal parole board. I think we've made that point a few times in this House, that in fact, of people who go before the National Parole Board, approximately 55% to 60% of those folks are released, whereas with the Ontario Parole and Earned Release Board, less than 20% are released into the communities.

We on this side of the House think if there's one thing we can do to at least ease this burden, it's for all the members of the government side of the House to tell the Minister of Community Safety that this is the wrong decision and to lose that file and to bury it because we don't think that in any way it's a move that is tough on crime.

One thing that I did want to add to that while I'm talking about the parole board—and I could go on forever about the number of people the National Parole Board has released into their communities, but one thing that is really important is the cost of the parole board. A sitting member of the parole board today in the province of Ontario receives a per diem rate of \$135 to \$150 per day. A National Parole Board member receives \$600 a day, a little over four times the amount of money, to sit on the National Parole Board, and that's transferring a cost to taxpayers of approximately, we understand, a little under \$12 million. For the federal government to assume control of the provincial Parole and Earned Release Board, they need another \$12 million. It's only costing a little over \$2 million today to operate the provincial parole board and, as I said in the House yesterday, there is only one taxpayer, and I think it's important to say in this House that we have to respect all taxpayers.

We think that the oldest parole board in Canada, the Ontario parole board, has done a remarkable job. They have remarkable staff and they are not lenient in the way they allow people onto streets who have committed crimes. I'm asking the members of the government to please reconsider that decision. We don't want to see that bill brought before the House. We don't want to debate it, we want to leave the provincial parole board alone and let those folks do the good job they've been doing for many decades.

We talk about gun violence, and I don't know how many times we've sat in this House and the question's been raised, particularly by the Progressive Conservatives ministers in the past and the critics today, about how the federal government deals with harsh sentencing. Of course, we think the sentences aren't tough enough. We urge the government, Minister Kwinter and Minister Bryant to get together with the federal government immediately and have the feds draft some legislation that

allows them to be tougher on crime. We won't end up with a system like we have today where we've got this huge bureaucracy, a huge boondoggle with the federal gun registry, which has been a terrible disaster. Today duck hunters have to register their guns, but criminals don't register their guns. That seems to be a terrible move.

1120

Here we are today with all these shootings and I will be very curious to see, if they can find the people who have done the shootings and if they actually do find the guns, how many of those folks actually had registered guns. My guess is probably none. That's where the federal gun registry has let us down badly, at a huge cost. It has failed the citizens of Canada and it has failed the citizens of Ontario. We only have to look at the number of shootings that have occurred right here in the GTA this summer to understand how severe that has actually been. So we on this side of the House will be asking over and over again for tougher sentencing.

I am very pleased that the member opposite has had the courage to bring this bill forward as a private members' resolution. I'm not so sure how happy some of his colleagues would be about this, because we don't think the government has been very tough on crime and we don't think they've done a very good job in community safety. We understand that the justice ministries are trying to hack \$300 million out of their budgets. I don't know if this is a very good place to start. When a member comes forward with a bill that asks the government to be tough on crime, I don't know how the government can even think of slashing the budgets by anything at all, let alone a sum as astronomical as \$300 million.

It is important that all members of this House support this bill. I think what's even more important is that the government very quickly react to it. I think the resolution actually says that: "That in the opinion of this House, the government of the Ontario should urgently address the issue of violence, gang-related crime and the illegal use of firearms—as a matter of public safety and responsible government—by being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime." I think the key word there—and again, I congratulate the member for bringing it forward—is that it is an urgent matter.

I could read through a number of press releases from our leader since August 1: "John Tory Calls for Action on Illegal Guns—Urges stricter border controls, tougher sentences and more officers on the streets."

August 4: "John Tory Urges More Action to Battle Guns—Dalton McGuinty's words are not enough, we need real action and more police officers."

**Mr. Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre):** That's right.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Sorry, not one police officer has been hired; not one. Do you know what? You should have had 333 on the streets today. If you actually—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member, just take your seat. I feel a little left out of the conversation, so if you would direct your remarks to the chair, I'd appreciate it.

**Mr. Dunlop:** That is exactly the point. Their platform called for 1,000 new police officers over the term of the government. If we're lucky, we might have 500 in the final year of their term. But as of today, not one has been hired and we've got this gun violence occurring. So please don't stand there and show how little you know about community safety.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker:** Order. I shouldn't have to call more than once or twice that you come to order and we listen to the speaker. Member.

**Mr. Dunlop:** Well, the truth hurts, and that's what's bothering these people. They don't know anything at all about what's happening in community safety, other than what we've told them again today, that \$300 million has been slashed from it. If they think they're getting 1,000 cops, good luck, because it has not happened yet. As I said earlier, we should have had at least a third of those police officers on the streets today, and none are there today. We understand that some of them are in training. Maybe a few of them might have been allocated once the municipalities, at 70% of the cost, actually put the police officers into effect.

But I will go on and read some of the headlines from Mr. Tory's comments.

August 9: "Not Enough Action on Gun Violence: Tory—McGuinty dragging his feet on more police, tougher sentencing, effective youth strategy."

August 12: "McGuinty Promises More Officers Once Again—John Tory asks how can we trust the McGuinty Liberals this time to deliver?" That was the fourth time they announced it, that day.

August 15: "More Shootings=More Urgent Action Needed—Tory urges McGuinty Liberals to implement broader strategy to battle gun violence."

August 17: "McGuinty Liberals Still Don't Get it on Crime—John Tory calls on McGuinty to recognize urgency of problem and take action on gun violence."

August 17 again: "Tory Pushes for Tougher Sentencing—Tory calls on federal government to support tougher minimum sentences for gun crimes."

August 18: "More Support Needed to Fight Gun Violence—Tory calls on all levels of government to support work of police and community leaders."

August 23: "John Tory Supports Call for Gun Summit—McGuinty shouldn't have ignored call for summit on youth violence nine months ago."

September 1: "Where Have the Liberals Been this Summer?—33 gun murders: time for McGuinty Liberals to finally realize there's a problem."

September 8: "Tory Calls for Action Against Violent Crime—John Tory urges McGuinty to end his silence on crime, take action to make streets safer."

October 17: "McGuinty Must Stop Ignoring Gun Violence—Tory calls for action as shootings continue and McGuinty Liberals do virtually nothing."

Just Tuesday: "McGuinty Must Pay Attention to Crime File—Criminals getting day passes to Canada's Wonderland, parole board to get more power."

So you can imagine how shocked we are to actually see a motion coming from a member of the government calling for tougher sentencing and for the government to get tough on crime.

I commend the member for bringing it forward. Our party will be supporting this and we will certainly be supporting the government if they actually follow through on this. It looks like it's probably just an opportunity for a little bit of media on it, but we want to see real action on this file, not just motions and not just support of the party. We want to see the government coming forward and actually introducing something, showing us a plan and showing exactly what they're doing with the federal government and how they're communicating with the federal government so we can get tough on crime and avoid the ridiculous, unnecessary deaths that we've had across this province.

I thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today. I look forward to the debate and to the full support of everybody in this House for this bill and for the government to act on the resolution that's before you today.

**Mr. Duguid:** I want to begin by thanking and commending the member for Etobicoke North on something completely different, on the leadership he's shown in closely working with the Premier and the Minister of Citizenship in ensuring that Ontario's response to the recent earthquake in Pakistan was significant, substantial and meaningful. I want to thank him for that effort—fantastic work.

I also want to thank him for the leadership he's shown in his own community. It's very difficult when a community is going through these difficulties, these challenges, these shootings. I want to thank him for the leadership he's shown in his community in assisting the victims in his area in dealing with these very difficult issues.

Finally, I want to thank him for bringing this issue before us today. This is a very important issue, and I want you to know that, as the member for Scarborough Centre and as somebody who has been elected for over 10 years now, there is no issue more important to myself and my constituents than the issue of community safety and, in particular, youth crime and violence.

I have been immersed in this issue for over a decade. In fact, it's one of the passions that I think I brought to politics when I first got elected and one of the reasons I originally put my name on the ballot. If I was going to talk about my life's work so far in politics, this would certainly be the issue that I've probably done the most work in.

As a city of Scarborough councillor, I had the privilege and opportunity to found and chair the special committee on crime prevention of Scarborough. We put



together the strategy for the city of Scarborough back in the mid-1990s. I followed that up after the amalgamation by being the first chair, and the only chair during the time I served on Toronto city council, of the task force on community safety, where we put together a crime prevention strategy for the city of Toronto and a strategy for Mayor Lastman, at that time, to deal with youth crime and violence. I'm proud to say that they were strategies considered as models not only across Canada, but around the world. It's something I was very proud to have had the opportunity to work with a number of people on.

1130

Being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime is more than just a motto; it's an approach, a passion that the McGuinty government is bringing and implementing across the province. It's a balanced approach that recognizes that, while it's essential to do everything we possibly can to prevent our young people from choosing a life of crime or choosing to go in that wrong direction, it's just as essential that we move swiftly and strongly to bring strict enforcement against those who do fall through the cracks and who do choose that lifestyle.

This has been a tough summer, with 41 deaths caused by firearms and 61 homicides to date. It's probably the worst year on record in term of the firearm homicides in Toronto's history. What's required now is an all-out assault on crime as well as the causes of crime. Frankly, the hardened gang members, many of whom are involved in these particular homicides, may be considered beyond our help in terms of preventive efforts. The only way to deal with those gangs, frankly, is to bring them down. That's why the McGuinty government's efforts to bring forward 1,000 new police officers in areas that target things like guns and gangs is so important to our city and to our province.

There's no playing nice with these guys. For the most part, they're hardened criminals, they're organized gang members, and as I said, they must be brought down. That's why our investment in guns and gangs units is so important. That's why we have to look at enhancing those investments. I look in the future, as we move forward in trying to resolve some of these issues, to see enhancements in that area.

I'm pleased to see our Attorney General boldly calling on minimum sentences for crimes committed with a firearm. If you use a firearm for anything, if you have a handgun on you, obviously you have it on you for some kind of sinister reason. It's very important that there be a severe consequence for even having a handgun on you. I don't believe there's a need for handguns in Ontario, frankly, and I think we should be considering banning them altogether. You don't need a handgun to go hunting and you don't need a handgun to protect your farm from predators. Handguns really have no useful use in our society, and I think we should consider banning them.

You have to be tough on enforcement, but we've got to think of the next generation as well, the next generation of young people growing up through that cycle of

poverty and of teenage pregnancies occurring at an alarming rate. We've got to think of those young people coming up through the next generation. That's why it's so important that we focus as well on the preventive side, on preventing teenage pregnancies; providing young single mothers with the help they need to help them and their children break through the cycle of violence and poverty; intervention at preschool and intervention during the early years in school; recreation programs for young people, but not just fighting with a basketball on a court, but with the outreach component that's so important to go with it, so we can intervene with those young people before it's too late; a pre-charge diversion program, something we've had some good success with to date, but we need to invest in further; and post-charge diversion.

These are the kinds of things we also have to concentrate on. It has to be a two-pronged approach if it's to be successful. If you have one without the other, we're bound to fail. This government is committed to a balanced approach. We will be successful. We will tackle these issues.

That's all I have to say for the moment, but I thank the member for bringing this very important issue to the floor. It's an extremely important issue for all of us here in this province. Let's get on with it.

**Ms. Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth):** I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to respond to this resolution before us today, and I congratulate the member for bringing it forward. It's very important, although it's brief and it's a private member's bill, that we are having this discussion this morning.

I think we would all agree that something has gone terribly wrong. We have to acknowledge that, stop wringing our hands and agonizing, and do something about it. There are all kinds of people from the communities who are telling us what to do and organizations telling us what to do, there are recommendations galore telling us the things we need to do as governments to make the changes, both on the security side, the criminal justice side, and on the community infrastructure side. The blueprint is there: We just have to take action.

I want to say that although my community of Toronto-Danforth is not one of those, fortunately, where there has been a lot of gang violence and shootings, although there has been some, and I want to at this point acknowledge a young man who was shot a few years ago in my community named Kempton Howard. Remember Kempton? He was killed close to Christmas. He was shot just outside his door in his apartment building in the Riverdale area. He was a pillar in the community. He was known as a youth leader, a role model.

I became friends with his mother, Joan Howard, who is an incredible woman, who's strong. She's continuing to deal with the aftermath of the shooting and raise her other son without his brother. They're just now, several years later, in pre-trial, where she's now facing the young men who are accused of murdering her son. I certainly want to pay tribute to her, Joan Howard, and all of those

mothers, fathers and relatives who have had to deal with the aftermath of mostly their sons' deaths, though sometimes young women have been caught in the crossfire as well, and tell them that this is an issue that we all want to do something about and work with them on.

I attended a press conference here recently by a coalition of people from various black organizations who gave a powerful press conference and told us that they view this as a crisis in their community, and they want action and told us what to do. I recently attended the report by the Toronto Community Foundation. As you know, they conduct an annual check-up on Toronto and they publish it in their Vital Signs report. I attended this year's report last Friday, and its findings spoke to this summer's headlines. It found that while the city's overall crime rate continues to decline, the number of people between the ages of 18 and 24 who are perpetrators of violent crime was on the rise.

The authors urge readers, particularly decision-makers, to look beyond the headlines and address what factors were happening to cause this disturbing trend. They talked about factors—and again, this is not new to us—like more youth living in poverty. Young people have been particularly impacted by the increased prevalence of poverty in Toronto over the past two decades. There has been a 100% increase—100%—in the number of children living in high-poverty neighbourhoods, and a 60% increase in the number of youth living in higher-poverty neighbourhoods. The scarcity of programs and services that give opportunities to these youths to increase their prospects, break the cycle of poverty and reduce their risk to be drawn to street life—this scarcity is both a product of funding cuts made under the previous Tory government and the changing location of poverty.

Not only has there been a dramatic increase in the number of poor neighbourhoods in Toronto, but they have moved to the inner suburbs like Scarborough, North York and Etobicoke. Historically, social services and community centres offering resources and recreation have not been concentrated in those areas. It has been pointed out by the United Way report recently, Poverty by Postal Code, that there is this real and serious issue in these outlying suburbs. They do not have the services that we have in downtown Toronto.

Many parents and youth have expressed anxiety over the lack of facilities and programs for youth. During community consultations in these areas—and I want to tell you that although it hasn't been in the media, it's been happening quietly. I'm sure many of us are doing it. Howard Hampton has been meeting with many youth groups across our communities, and I have joined him in some of the tours and some of the meetings. We met just the other night with some Tamil youth in the Scarborough area who talked about what's happening to them and their friends in their schools and communities. We're hearing from youth, in every location we meet with them, the same stories over and over again. There is a pattern here and that's what we're speaking about today.

1140

They talk about the lack of constructive learning, recreational activities and employment opportunities. Those were their main concerns, coupled with the fear of getting caught up in growing gang violence. The Toronto Community Foundation has, in successive reports, been calling for reinvestment in youth programming and community spaces that they feel are their own. The same recommendation has been made by the city in its community safety plan and by organizations like the United Way of Greater Toronto.

I want to underscore here that youth programs cannot exclude those who are already in the cycle of violence. There's a really dangerous trend taking place in funding social services that is seeing government withdraw from funding programs to help people who are facing multiple barriers; simply put, the hard cases. Programs for gang intervention and exit programs cannot be left as concepts on paper. They need to be implemented.

We heard from youth in schools that the Safe Schools Act is a disaster. We heard it over and over again. It means throwing out some of those hard cases and sometimes not-so-hard cases who get caught up in the Safe Schools Act. They're thrown out on to the street. It's causing all kinds of domestic problems in their homes. They're not getting an education. They can't get a job. There's nowhere else for them to turn. It is not the way to deal with young people who are having to make difficult choices in their lives, who may be having problems at home. The interventions in the schools are no longer there. The social workers and the guidance counsellors thrown out by the previous government: We need to put those services back. That's what these kids are telling us.

I know some people might dismiss what I've mentioned in terms of dealing with some of these so-called hard cases as a big hug, and that that's not the way to deal with it, that it won't deliver and won't reverse the trend.

I want to read a testimonial from someone who has been there, and I don't know if I'll pronounce his name right because I don't know him personally. Kardinal Offishal is one of the country's best musicians. In an interview he gave this summer, he weighed in on this debate about what is needed to stop the violence, and here's the quote:

"There's a lot of lost kids on the streets right now—that's the real issue.

"They need guidance and something to do that will keep them out of trouble."

Offishal learned first-hand how beneficial government-backed social programs can be back in 1993 when he participated in the Toronto Arts Council's Fresh Arts program, part of the NDP government's Jobs Ontario Youth, called the JOY initiative. He goes on to say:

"In the aftermath of all the kids rampaging downtown, following the Rodney King verdict in '93, the Bob Rae government stepped in with some funding for youth-oriented programs like Fresh Arts. That's really how"—he mentions—"Saukrates, Jully Black, Baby Blue Sound-



crew and I got our start. It gave us something useful to do.

"We were able to go into radio stations and recording studios and see how engineers and producers worked behind the scenes. Many of us had never been inside a studio before, let alone recorded a song in one. Through that program we also got to promote our own events, from making the flyers to doing radio promotion, everything. I can't begin to put a dollar value on what I learned."

That's a testimonial from somebody who felt his life going the other way and a government program specifically for youth was able to help him and many others, not only not to go down that road but to lead to very successful recording careers.

To respond to crime as it happens, we need the resources there in place. That's become increasingly clear time after time.

I should say as well that I was very pleased to hear John Tory, now the leader of the official opposition, when he went out on a tour after a whole array of shootings over one weekend. I was very pleased to hear him say to the media—I'm sure not everybody in his caucus supported him on that—that we needed to put some of those programs back, the programs that they took away. And we do need to put them back. The Liberal government needs to make it a priority to put them back, because they're not back yet. I know it takes time. When Mike Harris took away all these programs and cut the funding out of the education system and programs for kids to finance a tax cut for the wealthy, we said that once you tear down these things that took our parents generations to build up—these safety nets and social programs—it takes time to put them back in. We have to get our priorities straight here and we have to put these programs back in. We have to make sure there are enough social workers and guidance counsellors in the schools and these kinds of youth programs to help not only the kids who are not in trouble, the good kids, but the kids who are going down that road.

In my few minutes left, I want to talk about the need for more police officers on our streets. On this one, I have to agree with what the Conservatives said. I'm glad the member is going to be an advocate within his own government on this, because I've heard the announcement and the reannouncement of the reannouncement of the reannouncement of the 1,000 new officers over the past couple of years. I went a few months ago to the last reannouncement of the 1,000 new officers. Not one of those officers has been hired. I hear that apparently they are in training, but they are not on the street yet. Originally, they were supposed to be community-based officers who would be visible and become part of the community, and that is no longer the case. That's where we really need these officers to be.

I also want to say very strongly to the member, and I'm sure he would agree with me on this, that the cost-sharing arrangement in order for municipalities to hire these police officers puts cash-starved municipalities in a

position to make it, if not impossible, almost impossible—and for some, impossible—to hire. The province is approving only a third of the cost, but they're not uploading any of the other services.

**Mr. Jeff Leal (Peterborough):** Public health.

**Ms. Churley:** You know what? You talk to the municipalities about that. I know the government wants to defend its actions. I know that; I understand that. But I'm saying here today that municipalities cannot afford to hire these police officers. I know it's a sore point with the government. We have a resolution before us today that's forcing us to look at all these issues in an honest way, because if we don't, we're not going to be able to stop this. So let's admit that there is a problem with the announcement of getting 1,000 new cops on the street. You need to look at that, because it's not going to work the way it's framed now, and municipalities are telling us that.

I welcome the resolution before us today and, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, we have the answers before us. We do not need to reinvent the wheel; we just need to read the reports of the Toronto Community Foundation, the United Way, the city of Toronto and all of the groups out there from the communities that are working hard and have recommendations and are telling us exactly what we need to do. If we do it, if we follow up and do what they're telling us to do, we can put an end to this youth violence.

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne (Don Valley West):** I'm very happy to rise to support this motion. It's interesting for me today. I've spoken about issues of agriculture and I'm moving into a very urban issue, but I think in the same way that issues for our farmers affect all of us, these issues in our urban centres, particularly in Toronto, affect the whole province, and we have to work together.

I want to talk about two aspects of this that are close to my heart. The member for Etobicoke North in his motion points to immediate remedies that are needed and longer-term remedies that are needed. The issues of community mobilization and public education are the two things that I think we need to talk about and focus on.

Community mobilization has to do with individuals in communities taking responsibility and taking action, and working with our police officers. In the same way that the government can't do everything—and there are certainly government programs, and I'll talk about those in a second vis-à-vis education—police officers can't do everything, and have to be able to work with communities that are willing. I know that the communities in Toronto are willing to work with police officers to change the culture, but there's work to be done there.

1150

In the riding that I represent, there has been violence over the summer, and I'm very concerned about the community reaction. Jane Jacobs, the urban thinker, talks about "eyes on the street" and the need for communities to be paying attention to what's going on around them and to be willing to talk about what's going on around them, with each other and with the authorities. Last night

I was at a town hall at 53 division, and the programs the police officers were talking about at that event—police officers like Heinz Kuck and Peter Henry, people who get to know the community and the young people so that when they're in uniform, the young people know who they are when they're walking in their communities. I think that those community mobilization initiatives are extremely important.

This Sunday at Yonge-Dundas Square, from 3:00 to 6:00, the United Mothers Opposing Violence Everywhere are going to have a rally. It's not insignificant that those kinds of city-wide events are starting to happen. But at the same time, at the local level, Chief Bill Blair will tell us that it's extremely important that community members talk to each other, that we as MPPs, and working with our city councillors, pull together community leaders and talk about what the gaps are and where the community can come together to help itself and to work with the authorities.

Public education I think is an absolutely prime mover in terms of creating a safe community. Some of the things we're doing in this government—the community use of schools, opening up the doors of the schools that have been shut tight over the last eight or 10 years when the previous government was in place—those schools are the public spaces where people can gather, and they can create their own links and provide opportunities for their youth to take part. That is an absolutely critical piece, and I certainly am a voice in my caucus to push for more of that, as much as we can do in terms of creating those community hubs—that and Learning to 18, keeping kids in school and giving them hope. Those are the kinds of long-term things, along with the more immediate community mobilization that we are moving on and that we have to do more of.

**Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham):** I am also happy to speak in support of this motion. First of all, I want to thank my colleague the member from Etobicoke North for putting this forward.

I want to start by saying that as a former member of the York Regional Police services board, I certainly understand the complexity of gang-related crimes and violence. Unfortunately, in my own riding of Markham and throughout York region there have been a number of events related to violence and gang-related crime in the last couple of the years, so there's no question in my mind that no one community has a monopoly over this subject matter.

I want to say that this does not, in my mind, reflect in any negative way on the police services undertaken by York Regional Police. In fact, I know these folks well. Under the leadership of Chief Armand LaBarge, we have Inspector Rouse of district number 5, which oversees the police services in my riding, also Superintendent Kalinsky and former Inspector Eric Jolliffe. These, in my mind, are certainly the most fine and dedicated professionals, but they need help. They've actually done a number of programs in respect of community policing, including the VIP program in elementary schools, the

street beat program, as well as Neighbourhood Watch. These are effective but this is not enough.

I want to maybe speak to the aspect of being tough on the causes of crime. I think it's equally important for us to be as tough with crime as we should be tough with causes of crime.

My colleagues from Scarborough Centre and Toronto-Danforth have alluded to the issue of poverty. Yes, definitely they are closely related, but it's much more than that. It's also education, health and many other aspects. That's why I think it's important for us to take a comprehensive approach to tie various causes into our strategy.

There's been extensive research with respect to the funds that a government spends on prevention of crime as opposed to incarceration and rehabilitation. The research basically shows that it's a 1 to 3 ratio, meaning that every dollar we do not spend on prevention will lead to an expenditure of more than \$3 subsequently. But it's not just a matter of money. I think it's a matter of trying to be responsible, to help our youth, to help our residents to lead a good life and to be able to enjoy the quality of life they deserve. We have said, as a government, a number of times that diversity is our strength, but with that also comes responsibility that we must deal with and take on.

I want to speak to one aspect of organized crime and again related crime, and that is on some of the new immigrant youth. It is one thing for us to say, "Gee, now we have Russian gangs, Sri Lankan gangs, Chinese gangs," and so on, but a lot of these youth did not come into this country, day one, as a member of organized crime. It is basically because the system has failed them. I think we must address the roots of the problem. In respect of that, we should really deal with issues of education, health, poverty, as well as settlement.

That is why our government has been so strong in chasing after the federal government to be fair to us on the \$23-billion deficit. In order for us to help immigrants to help their children, we need the resources. It is unfair for Ontario residents and their children to be without the funding they're entitled to.

It really is important for us to deal with the roots, especially for the youth, so that they do not become prey of organized crime as of day one. They become prey after they have not received the support and services of our government and the federal government.

That is why I believe that this motion will actually highlight some issues related to causes of crime, and we should deal with them as effectively and expeditiously as possible.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Member for Etobicoke North, you have two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Qaadri:** First of all I'd like to welcome, honour and appreciate the remarks made by my colleagues in this Legislature: the MPPs from Simcoe North, Toronto-Danforth, Scarborough Centre, Don Valley West and Markham.

In reply specifically to the MPP from Simcoe North: There is much more than just media on this file; there's



blood on this file. The issue of public safety and violence is urgent, important, imminent, pressing, and also, to borrow some medical terminology, life-threatening.

As I've mentioned previously in this chamber, I had the unfortunate duty of attending three funerals this past summer of young individuals, young men who were gunned down in the prime of life. Just as a case in point, the sum of their ages was 63.

That's why we as a government must move forward on a multi-pronged effort to be both tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime, whether we're dealing with the flow of firearms, more specific measures to deal with gang-related offences, invoking the powers of the Attorney General regarding sentencing and empowering the criminal justice system, whether we're forcing the medical and health communities to do mandatory gunshot reporting, and of course engaging our federal colleagues.

But at the same time, with the punishment aspect we must also upgrade and elevate society and move toward the Trudeauesque just society, whether it's engaging youth and creating programs for community activities, sports or, ultimately, as my colleague from Don Valley West said, education, because that truly is the holistic cure for a prosperous and non-violent society.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you to all members. The time provided for private members' public business has now expired.

#### FOODLAND ONTARIO

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Wynne has moved private member's notice of motion number 1. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will call in the members for a vote on this after we have dealt with ballot item number 2.

#### CRIME PREVENTION

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Qaadri has moved private member's notice of motion number 2. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will call in the members on this as well. I remind the members that this is a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1201 to 1206.*

#### FOODLAND ONTARIO

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Wynne has moved private members' notice of motion number 1. All those in favour will please rise.

#### Ayes

Amott, Ted  
Arthurs, Wayne  
Barrett, Toby  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Bryant, Michael  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Churley, Marilyn  
Colle, Mike  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Fonseca, Peter  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David  
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Prue, Michael  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Wilkinson, John  
Wong, Tony C.  
Wynne, Kathleen O.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 37; the nays are zero.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion passed.

The doors will be unlocked for 30 seconds before we take the next vote.

#### CRIME PREVENTION

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Qaadri has moved private members' notice of motion number 2. All those in favour will please rise.

#### Ayes

Amott, Ted  
Arthurs, Wayne  
Barrett, Toby  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Bradley, James J.  
Brownell, Jim  
Bryant, Michael  
Chudleigh, Ted  
Churley, Marilyn  
Colle, Mike  
Duguid, Brad  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Fonseca, Peter  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoy, Pat  
Jeffrey, Linda  
Klees, Frank  
Kormos, Peter  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Jean-Marc  
Leal, Jeff  
Mitchell, Carol  
Mossop, Jennifer F.  
Oraziotti, David  
Ouellette, Jerry J.

Prue, Michael  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Racco, Mario G.  
Ruprecht, Tony  
Scott, Laurie  
Smith, Monique  
Smitherman, George  
Van Bommel, Maria  
Wilkinson, John  
Wong, Tony C.  
Wynne, Kathleen O.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 37; the nays are zero.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I declare the motion passed.

All matters relating to private members' public business having now been dealt with, I do leave the chair. The House will resume at 1:30 of the clock.

*The House recessed from 1210 to 1330.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### WASTE REDUCTION WEEK

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** I rise in the Legislature to bring greetings about Waste Reduction Week in Canada. It's intended to raise public awareness about the waste we produce and its environmental and social costs. Today, the Recycling Council of Ontario hosts their Waste Minimization Awards to recognize those contributing to a cleaner environment. The previous government's Waste Diversion Act is vital to the promotion of recycling, reducing and reusing waste.

Ontario's recycling effort is focused on the blue box program. However, the Coalition for an Efficient and Rational Blue Box has questioned this government about the blue box system and has not received a response since they published their report in August.

Ontario households generate approximately 4.1 million tonnes of waste per year; 35% of this is dry recyclables like plastic, paper, glass and metal. In order for the government to reach its 60% waste diversion target, the blue box system must be improved. Recovery rates for materials are far below what many Ontarians would expect. Newspapers fare well—they have a 75% recovery rate—but only 41% of aluminum cans are recovered and plastics are only recovered 16% of the time.

Ontarians are seriously disappointed to learn that materials they put in their blue boxes are ending up in landfills. There is no indication of this government improving the blue box program or making it more financially viable for rural and northern communities. This is just another example of this government's waste management strategy that is far from amazing. It is nothing more than smoke and mirrors and avoids facing the problem of responsible waste management.

#### SUPPORT FOR SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

**Mr. Jim Brownell (Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh):** The countries of Pakistan, Afghanistan and India are far from Ontario, yet the great tragedy that has occurred there and the response it has generated here make our communities seem much closer together. There are those of us directly affected, like Riaz Ahmed from my riding of Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh, who was fortunate to confirm that his extended family members were lucky survivors. There are also the extended communities, and when I say this, I mean not only those Ontarians who can trace their family history back to South Asia but their friends, neighbours and colleagues as well.

Ontario is not a collection of isolated ethnic groups, language groups or religions. We are, all of us, part of one community. What affects one of us affects us all, so when tragedy strikes one of us, we all respond.

It gives me great pride to see this province coming together to support our South Asian community. On October 10, Premier McGuinty announced an immediate donation of \$1 million on behalf of the people of Ontario to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Our Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Mike Colle, has demonstrated much leadership on this file, and I know he has been working diligently with my colleague Dr. Sheela Basrur to establish an earthquake response team.

Most impressive, however, has been the response from the citizens of this great province. I have been overwhelmed with the support my community has shown, and

this has been reciprocated across the province. This is what Ontario stands for. This is what we are all about.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds-Grenville):** Ontarians know the McGuinty Liberal government was elected on the basis of critically important promises that they have consistently failed to keep. One of these broken promises is in the nursing home sector. I'd like to read a motion recently passed by the board at Sherwood Park Manor, an outstanding nursing home in my riding.

"Whereas the Liberal Party promised during the 2003 election campaign to increase funding to long-term-care homes by \$6,000 per resident per annum; and

"Whereas funding for direct care and services to residents was increased in 2004 by \$3.49, along with an increase of 75 cents for 2005, with the expectation that homes increase the level of staffing; and

"Whereas funding for direct care and services to residents was increased in 2005 by \$1, an increase which falls short of inflationary costs for long-term-care homes; and

"Whereas these combined increases represent less than a third of the government's \$6,000 promise; and

"Whereas significant investment is needed now to meet the significant needs of residents;

"Therefore, be it resolved that this board urges the government to increase the per diem to residents of long-term-care homes in the fiscal year 2006-07 by \$4,083.75 per resident, thereby fulfilling its election promise."

I implore the government to heed that request and keep its promise to the nursing home sector. To do otherwise is a betrayal of the frail and elderly residents of these homes.

#### TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale):** Since coming to office, our government has moved aggressively to improve Ontario's transportation systems. These improvements are being realized in Willowdale. Just last month, Minister Takhar came personally to my riding of Willowdale to announce improvements to the Highway 401 and Yonge Street interchange, a difficult and congested exchange for many years.

Our government has also invested \$1.2 billion in our highway system. We have improved road safety. We have developed a construction strategy. This fall, our government will increase investment in the 105 municipalities that have public transit to 1.5% of the provincial gas tax, totalling \$214 million.

The residents in my riding understand our government's strong commitment to transit systems like the TTC. They understand this also represents our commitment to a strong city of Toronto. It means that my constituents in Willowdale, and indeed in the GTA, can rest assured that our government is providing the TTC with the investments that it needs to service this area.



When we came to office, we promised to create a new deal for municipalities. We are keeping that commitment. This investment demonstrates not only our commitment to municipalities, but it sends a clear message to the rest of Ontario. We are committed to public transport that people can depend upon. I'm proud to be a member of a government launching this initiative.

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe—Grey):** Grey-Bruce Health Services' Markdale hospital is the only health care facility between Owen Sound and Orangeville on the Highway 10 corridor, and serves almost 20,000 residents from the communities of Markdale, Flesherton, Dundalk and the surrounding rural areas. The hospital serves a vital role in response to motor vehicle accidents and also responds to the seasonal needs of the area's dynamic skiing community. For the residents of Grey Highlands, the hospital offers 21 beds for in-patient care, an obstetrical service, general surgery and plastic surgery, and employs 89 staff members.

These services are provided in a building that is functionally obsolete. Parts of this hospital are over 50 years old and, without major repairs, the facility may only last two to three years more. Four accreditation surveys have recommended its replacement. Patient safety, patient confidentiality, operational efficiency and care delivery constraints are driving the need to rebuild this hospital.

A new structure is planned for the Grey Gables site. The Centre Grey General Hospital Foundation is leading the redevelopment campaign to replace the current hospital with a building that is efficient, will meet the current and future needs of the community and will serve to retain health professionals in the community. So far, the local campaign, led by Dr. Hamilton Hall, has raised \$13.1 million, well over their \$12-million target.

I want to thank Ministers Smitherman and Caplan for agreeing to meet with me and Bill Murdoch and the hospitals officials in the near future to discuss rebuilding the hospital. Today, I'm calling upon the Liberal government to do the right thing, the fair thing, and help us to rebuild our hospital—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

### EDUCATION

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** I rise today to discuss one of our government's great successes: the improvement of education in this province. As was noted in the throne speech last week, "The brains and know-how of a highly skilled workforce are the economic edge of the 21st century." We recognize that when we strengthen the education and skills of our people, we strengthen Ontario's economic advantage.

That is why I was thrilled to be asked by Mrs. MaryLou Smith from my riding to participate in a special educational module for 34 gifted students from the

Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board. These students have travelled to Toronto and are studying the media in our society. They come from Mother St. Bride, Our Lady of Sorrows, Corpus Christi, St. Hubert, St. Alexander, John XIII, St. Francis, Our Lady of Fatima, St. Theresa's and St. Joseph's. Today, they are visiting the CHUMCity station and have joined us here at Queen's Park.

I would like to thank Richard Brennan of the Toronto Star for taking the time to provide these students with some great insights into the media here at Queen's Park. I also want to thank Joe in the media studio for making it all possible for us.

It is programs like these that engage our young people and ensure that all of our students are meeting their potential. Congratulations to Mrs. Smith and her fellow teachers and the 14 supervisors who have brought this initiative here to Queen's Park. Best of luck to our 34 students, and a big "Thank you" to the Badger for his participation. A warning to you, Mr. Badger, and your colleagues in the press gallery: Take a good look in the public gallery today. You may be seeing the future.

1340

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell (Huron—Bruce):** The people of Huron—Bruce were extremely pleased to hear that the provincial government and Bruce Power have reached an agreement to produce over 1,500 megawatts of electricity capacity. The refurbishment of Bruce A units 1 and 2 is expected to create 1,500 construction jobs. The people who work and live in the area have been anxiously awaiting this announcement, and I am proud to say that the McGuinty government has delivered.

The firm support from investors in Bruce Power, such as TransCanada Corp., the Ontario municipal employees retirement board, Power Workers' Union and the Society of Energy Professionals shows their confidence in the future of this energy source. This project will provide jobs not only in Huron and Bruce counties but throughout Ontario. Suppliers for this project will come from various cities across the province, such as Mississauga, Pickering, Oakville, Niagara Falls and Cambridge.

This announcement demonstrates once again that this government is committed to meeting Ontario's electricity needs, including a reliable supply mix of energy. If you drive down Highway 21 from Bruce Power, new wind turbines are being erected in Huron county. Further south in Middlesex county, new technology: anaerobic digestion.

I am pleased to be a part of a government that is committed to providing a sufficient supply—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you.

### INDUSTRIE FORESTIÈRE

**M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins—Baie James):** On sait qu'aujourd'hui il y a une conférence de presse ici à

Queen's Park avec les représentants des syndicats qui représentent bien proche de 100 000 travailleurs à travers cette province dans l'industrie forestière.

On sait que non seulement les travailleurs mais aussi les communautés, et je dirais l'industrie elle-même, sont franchement fâchés contre ce gouvernement pour ne pas avoir répliqué au désastre qu'on trouve présentement dans l'industrie forestière—pas seulement au nord de l'Ontario mais à travers cette province.

On sait, par exemple, que l'industrie forestière représente, pour les gouvernements fédéral, provincial et municipaux, près de 1 \$ milliard de taxes qu'on collecte de cette industrie directement à cause de ses activités.

On sait qu'il y a environ 275 000 travailleurs dans cette province qui sont employés directement ou indirectement dans cette industrie, et on sait que ce gouvernement, jusqu'à cette date, n'a pas répliqué aux problèmes de l'industrie. Franchement, ils ont laissé tomber cette industrie-là et ils n'ont pas répondu à ses besoins. On se demande, dans l'industrie, pour quelle raison. Pourquoi est-ce que le gouvernement décide que c'est important de répliquer aux difficultés de l'industrie automobile et des autres, mais qu'il n'est pas préparé à répliquer aux problèmes qu'on a dans l'industrie forestière?

Cet après-midi, on va avoir un débat sur une motion d'opposition de notre leader, M. Hampton, du parti néo-démocratique. Je demande aux membres du gouvernement de payer attention et de faire quelque chose pour aider—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Merci. Thank you.

#### GROWTH PLANNING

**Mr. Dave Levac (Brant):** When we passed our greenbelt and Places to Grow legislation, we made the commitment to stop urban sprawl and encourage growth in regions other than the GTA. In my riding of Brant, we are experiencing first-hand the significant positive changes that the greenbelt legislation and the Places to Grow legislation is offering the residents of Ontario, particularly the constituents of my riding. Thank you to Ministers Caplan and Gerretsen for their leadership on this file.

We are in a great location to move goods and people all around southern Ontario. As Walter Gretzky put it, "Brantford is the centre of the universe."

The construction of the Ferrero manufacturing plant is close to completion, which will create up to 800 jobs in the first phase alone, further strengthening my region's economy. On October 8, municipal politicians from Brant and Brantford, accompanied by a representative from the Ministry of Agriculture, travelled to Italy to speak with Ferrero's head office about further expansion and to find new investment opportunities for the region that they have shown an interest in.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Minister Takhar for his leadership in facilitating industrial growth in Brant by expanding the Oak Park interchange. This

will allow developers, businesses and industries to expand into Brantford and take full advantage of our location, access to post-secondary education and highly skilled and motivated workforce.

I don't know that there's anyone in this House who would disagree with the father of the Great One that Brantford really is the centre of the universe. I appreciate this opportunity.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** I would like to draw members' attention to the members' west gallery and introduce a friend and colleague, Larry O'Connor, who represented the riding of Durham-York in the 35th Parliament.

**Mr. Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: In the visitors' gallery today are some of the brightest young people you are ever going to meet. They are students, faculty and family from École élémentaire Nouvel Horizon in Welland.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I'm very pleased today that we have a chapter of the Red Hat Society, a group that represents ladies from across the country and the world, and these are the Red Hot Mamma's on Georgian Bay. Please give them a warm round of applause.

**Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe-Grey):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I ask members to help me welcome to the Legislature today Councillor Bill Boston and his wife Elizabeth—Bill is on council in Adjala-Tosorontio—and their friends and my friends Patrick Oliver and Philomena Oliver.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** On a point of order. It's Thursday.

**Mr. Qadri:** Thank you, Speaker. With your indulgence, I would invite the House to recognize the South Asian Rexdale Sikh seniors who join us in the gallery above.

**The Speaker:** Welcome to everyone.

#### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

##### DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** I rise in the House today to update members on the issue of extending daylight saving time in this province.

This past summer, the United States government passed a law in an energy bill that, among other things, extends daylight saving time by four weeks starting in March 2007. Because of this decision and because of Ontario's extensive and inextricable links with the United States, Ontario had to decide if we, too, should make such a move.



I want to make it clear that Ontario does not automatically move in lockstep with the United States on this or any other issue. The test is always what is best for Ontario.

To that end, back in July, we created an interministerial committee led by my esteemed parliamentary assistant, the member for Willowdale, David Zimmer. He led the group's investigation into the potential impact that extending daylight saving time could have on Ontario. Over the past three months, Mr. Zimmer and his committee have consulted with all levels of government on the matter. They have also met with and heard from the concerns of a broad range of stakeholders representing a number of sectors, including education, energy, agriculture, finance and capital markets, trade and manufacturing, industry, public safety and transportation. They did a lot of work and they did a great job.

The results of the consultations were overwhelmingly supportive of taking action to ensure that Ontario's daylight saving time regime remains synchronized with that of the United States. Representatives from finance and capital markets, trade, manufacturing and industry unanimously urged us to harmonize daylight saving with the US. In fact, they told us that any misalignment could have a very real and negative impact, namely trade disruption, as well as cost, coordination, delivery system, supply chain and border pressures.

1350

Coordinating daylight saving time with the US makes good economic sense. However, our government also examined what this could mean for individual Ontarians. For example, we heard from parents and educators, many of whom told us that they applaud the extension of daylight saving time as it will mean extended daylight into the late afternoon. They believe this could present an opportunity to better promote outdoor activity and exercise for Ontario's young and not young.

We also heard from the Canada Safety Council, which supports the move, saying that that extra hour of daylight in the afternoon could reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities. Transport Canada research shows there are more pedestrian injuries and fatalities in the latter part of the afternoon—4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in particular—in the fall and winter as the days get shorter. An extra hour of daylight could present real safety advantages.

For a whole host of reasons, then, we are acting in the best interests of Ontario. So beginning in 2007, in Ontario, daylight saving time will start on the second Sunday in March and end on the first Sunday in November.

Thank you to Willowdale MPP David Zimmer for leading a comprehensive effort to ensure that we were, in fact, acting in the best interests of Ontario. Thank you, Mr. Zimmer, for that.

Making this change will allow us to maintain Ontario's competitive advantage by coordinating its time changes with its major trading partner, as well as improving day-to-day life for the people of this province.

Just to be clear, this has no effect on the upcoming return to eastern standard time on October 30, but come

March 2007, the daylight saving calendar will change and remain the same as our American neighbours.

## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** I would like to take this opportunity first to acknowledge the South Asian Seniors' Club of Rexdale. They are here today and I want to welcome them.

I rise in the House today to talk about something that I consider to be of great importance, and that is the safety of our children, especially the safety of our children when they are on a school bus. This is School Bus Safety Week, and we are joined by Rick Donaldson from the Ontario School Bus Association, as well as Brian Patterson from the Ontario Safety League. Rick and Brian know first-hand why this week is so vital, and we are happy to join with them to bring awareness of this issue. I want to acknowledge the great work that both of these organizations have done to promote the safety of our children and to thank them for their efforts.

I am proud to report that school buses in Ontario are safer than ever before. Our government is doing everything we can to stop drivers from putting children's lives in danger by illegally passing stopped school buses. If a school bus is stopped and the red lights are flashing, drivers must stop. It is the law in Ontario now.

Some 800,000 children in Ontario ride a bus to and from school every day. About 17,000 school buses are used in the province. Drivers across Ontario need to know that they are putting children's lives at risk if they illegally pass a school bus, and they will not get away with it. As of September 1, owners of vehicles that illegally pass a stopped school bus can be charged, no matter who is behind the wheel at the time.

One of my first acts as transportation minister was to introduce Bill 73, making owners liable when their vehicle illegally passes a stopped school bus. This legislation was passed by the Legislature last year. The provisions in this bill will go a long way to promote the safety of our children.

Signs are required on the back of every bus in Ontario, warning drivers of the maximum \$2,000 fine for illegally passing a stopped school bus.

I want to talk a little bit about the safety features that we are introducing on new school buses. Every school bus has a safety arm to keep kids from walking in front of the bus where the drivers can't see them, more emergency exit windows and better mirrors to improve the driver's line of sight. All of these new features have been added to all buses manufactured since January 1 this year.

I'm also pleased to report that we are distributing a new reporting form for school bus drivers. If you see a vehicle illegally passing a stopped school bus, now you can report it.

A survey by Transport Canada suggests that one third of school bus drivers across this country see a vehicle

illegally pass a stopped school bus at least once a day. That is unacceptable.

I am sure all members will want to join me in urging drivers to take care and obey the rules of the road, and the rules are simple: Don't pass a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing.

Keeping kids safe when they're travelling to and from school is important to parents, and it's important to our government.

### HYDRO REBATES

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield (Minister of Energy):** I rise today to provide members with details of a one-time credit that Ontario's electricity consumers can expect to see on an upcoming electricity bill. To be clear, every single penny that consumers overpaid last year is being returned to them—period. The typical family in a detached home can expect a credit of approximately \$60 before the end of the year.

This government is committed to providing Ontarians with a responsible plan for electricity pricing that is consistent with the true cost of generating electricity. Our government is the first to put electricity pricing back on a responsible and sustainable footing, and this credit is part of that commitment.

Unlike previous governments, we've taken the politics out of electricity pricing and we are ensuring that prices are fair, competitive, stable and predictable. As a result, we are building an electricity system that is both affordable and sustainable.

Due to the moderate weather in 2004, the actual cost of power was lower than the cost paid by consumers, and I'm pleased to say that we are returning the surplus to the ratepayers of Ontario.

Bill 4, passed by this Legislature in 2003, is one of the first pieces of legislation passed by this government. It set the interim electricity price for 2004 at 4.7 cents for the first 750 kilowatt hours used and 5.5 cents for anything over this amount, based on predicted supply and demand under normal weather conditions. In order to protect electricity ratepayers, Bill 4 legislated that any deficit incurred would not be passed on to ratepayers. Likewise, any surplus would be returned in full to Ontario consumers.

Bill 4 was introduced to act as a bridge mechanism while the regulated price plan was being developed. I'm pleased to say that the \$495 million that was paid by consumers, covered by the regulated price plan, is being returned to them. As soon as we found the final amount owed to the Ontario consumers, we paid it—every penny. The credit will be provided to all residential and small business electricity consumers, schools, hospitals and others covered by the government's regulated price plan, and credits will appear on bills before the end of the year in most cases.

1400

As I said earlier, we took the politics out of electricity pricing by restoring the independence of the Ontario

Energy Board. Going forward, the approach this government has put in place will ensure that prices to consumers are fair, competitive, stable and predictable.

With this announcement today, we've kept our commitment to Ontario electricity consumers that we would return any money they paid when we began our transition to a pricing structure based on the actual cost of providing power. The energy pricing approach this government has put in place is fair for consumers and is just one of the steps this government is taking to ensure that our electricity system is sustainable.

Through such measures as the establishment of the conservation bureau, and the smart metering and conservation legislation I look forward to introducing shortly, we are giving consumers the tools they need to best manage their own electricity uses and costs. At the same time, these tools will help Ontario reach our overall conservation goal, help reduce electricity costs for everyone, and ensure our electricity system is manageable and sustainable long into the future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Responses?

### DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** I'd like to respond to the statement by the new George Bush adherent, the Attorney General, on daylight saving time.

The timing of this statement is somewhat curious, since the Attorney General expresses concern about people misunderstanding the intent that it may go into effect this year. One has to ask, why did they not delay the announcement until we were into standard time? Be that as it may, he also referenced consultations conducted by his parliamentary assistant and mentioned the Ministry of Agriculture.

I have to say that if there is a major concern in the province of Ontario, it is in rural Ontario. That is a concern to families who have to send their kids out in the pitch dark to wait for a school bus. I would have had a greater level of comfort with respect to the minister's announcement if he had indicated extensive consultations with communities in this province that do have very significant and real concerns about this change.

I want to read into the record something written by Robertson Davies in 1947:

"I don't really care how time is reckoned so long as there is some agreement about it, but I object to being told that I am saving daylight when my reason tells me that I am doing nothing of the kind. I even object to the implication that I am wasting something valuable if I stay in bed after the sun has risen. As an admirer of moonlight I resent the bossy insistence of those who want to reduce my time for enjoying it. At the back of the daylight saving scheme I detect the bony, blue-fingered hand of puritanism"—could have said Liberalism—"eager to push people into bed earlier, and get them up earlier, to make them healthy, wealthy and wise in spite of themselves."

Despite those reservations, we support the initiative.



## HYDRO REBATES

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** I'm pleased to respond to the statement by the Minister of Energy. I was at that press conference earlier today. You know, if the minister could have found a chimney on the media studio, I'm sure she would have descended by it, because she sauntered in there like she was Santa Claus. She thought she was doing such a wonderful thing. Do you know what she is doing? She is telling the hard-working people of the province of Ontario who pay electricity bills, "After 16 long months, we're going to give you your money back. However, we have been pleased to treat you as a new lending institution in the province of Ontario. Thank you so much for your money, but it's paid back without interest."

I wonder, if those hard-working Ontarians were 16 months late paying their hydro bill, if they'd fare so well as the minister, who can simply say, "Here it is. Sorry we're late. You're lucky to get it. I'm Santa Claus."

She says she's removing the politics from electricity. What justifies this kind of announcement? You're paying back the money you owe. You're not giving anybody anything.

Even the minister of revenue doesn't stand up on April 30 and say, "Ladies and gentlemen of Canada, I want to tell you that starting tomorrow I'm sending out your income tax refund." It's your money, you are entitled to get it back, and this minister makes it sound like it's coming out of her jeans.

Good Lord, show some respect for hard-working Ontarians who have seen their livelihoods hurt by the policies of this government: higher taxes, punitive taxes, higher fees and energy costs, and getting less in the way of services from this government.

So what do we do? We have a media conference to tell you, "What great news. The money we've been keeping"—they must be keeping it in a can or a mattress, because, "We have no interest to give you. We've kept it for all this time, but lucky you. Here, in late October, just about when the winter heating season is coming, we've got a little cheque for you in the mail."

Thank you very much, Minister, but please, next time, pay the money you owe on time.

## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay):** I'd like to respond on behalf of New Democrats to the announcement made today by the Minister of Transportation in regard to Bill 73. I want to remind the minister that in this particular bill, what you've effectively done is download the cost of much of these measures on to the school bus operators and school boards across this province.

I'll remind you, for example, that as for one of the things in this bill—which is not a bad thing, to ask that new school buses meet certain safety conditions in terms of more windows etc. to make the buses safer—you've

downloaded the entire cost on to the school bus operators.

I talked today to Ron Malette, owner of Tisdale Bus Lines, who tells me he went out last year and bought seven new buses in order to keep his fleet up to standards, and he's had to pay an additional 1.5% on the purchase of these buses—no extra money from the province of Ontario. It's another example where governments do things, don't think about the consequences to those people who have to pay, and pass the cost on to the end user.

I'm just saying to the government that you should have at least adjusted the funding formulas through the Ministry of Education to offset that particular increase. On that point, I would also like to say that the Minister of Education, in opposition, promised they would put in place the full Rozanski report in terms of the transportation funding formulas to school boards. Here we are, two years into the mandate, and they're not even halfway to where they need to be and school bus operators have to keep the price of wages down in order to afford to operate. Why? Because the government has not responded to the Rozanski report, they've not done what they promised, they have not met their commitment when it comes to the funding levels that school bus drivers and operators need.

I remind the minister, if he hasn't noticed, that the price of fuel has gone up. There are no funding formulas to adjust for those costs to school bus operators. I say to you, you should think about what you do in terms of the effect on those who have to drive. I call on this government to do what is right and keep its promise when it comes to funding levels.

## HYDRO REBATES

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora–Rainy River):** I want to respond to the Minister of Energy, and I want to respond in three ways.

First of all, I'd point out that initially the government said they had overcharged consumers by \$535 million. Then, as it gets close to the day when they have to send back their money to hydro consumers, it suddenly becomes \$495 million. People may be wondering how this happens. Let me tell you how it happens with the McGuinty government. In February of this year, the McGuinty government tells people across Ontario, "Oh, the deficit is \$6 billion—terrible. We can't afford money for the lowest-income; we've got to continue to claw back money from them." Then suddenly, 60 days later, when they present their budget, the deficit comes in at \$3.5 billion. And then 90 days later, suddenly the deficit, when they want to make it sound like good news, is only about \$1.3 billion.

1410

This hydro rebate is the way the McGuinty government conducts its budget: The numbers change according to what kind of spin the McGuinty government wants to put out in a given day. Today, when it's time to pay the

money back to the people to whom the money belongs, suddenly it's a lesser amount. Not only that, but if you were to go to Canadian Tire and they overcharged you, and then you found out six months later, you would get the money back, plus you'd get the interest. Are the consumers of Ontario getting any interest from the McGuinty government despite the fact that the McGuinty government overcharged them over a year ago and has been holding on to the money for eight months? No interest. I suspect the interest was probably \$20 million or \$25 million in that time; the McGuinty government banks that.

That is the people's money. It should be going back to the hydro consumers. It doesn't belong to the McGuinty government, and if you were being fair and honest with people, it would be returned to the hydro consumers.

The minister referred to hydro prices as "fair and reasonable." I've been looking at the Bruce deal: You're going to pay them a 40% premium on the price; you're going to give them an inflation premium; you're going to give them a cost-of-uranium premium; we're going to cover half the cost overrun, if there is one; and you're going to reduce their lease payments by \$60 million a year, which works out to about \$1.2 billion over the course of the contract. Those kinds of gifts to a profit-making private company: Is that what the McGuinty government calls fair and affordable electricity? No wonder this company is proud of this contract; they're laughing all the way to the bank vault, thanks to the generosity of the McGuinty government, but that's all going to appear—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** It is now time for oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### MINISTER'S EXPENSES

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman (Leeds–Grenville):** Premier, on a day when you're handing hydro ratepayers a one-year-late, one-time \$60 credit for energy that you've overcharged them for, do you think it's appropriate that taxpayers should be forced to pay for a \$70 steak expense by one of your Liberal ministers?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm sure that the member opposite has more detail, and I look forward to learning more about it.

**Mr. Runciman:** Given the Premier's past rhetoric, I think he would have had a comment on appropriateness. But in the course of just over a week last September, your former Minister of Energy racked up \$49,262 in expenses on a five-star European adventure—four aides were along for the ride. One lunch in Brussels alone cost taxpayers \$789, this on a day when you're issuing a one-year-late, one-time \$60 credit to energy ratepayers to

make up for your government's mishandling of the energy file.

Why should taxpayers be forced to pay almost \$50,000 in travel expenses for your former Minister of Energy when he presided over an energy system that overcharged consumers for the energy they used? Why?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Well, I can tell you that the former Minister of Energy was exceptionally diligent, energetic and active when it came to getting hold of the energy file. I know that he was particularly active when it came to securing new investment so that we would have a reliable supply of electricity for the people of Ontario. Again, if the member opposite has a particular concern with respect to expenses, he knows there is a route available in that regard, and I would encourage him to place any requests he has with the Integrity Commissioner.

**Mr. Runciman:** Again, you have to wonder about the Premier's past history on ministerial expenses.

Premier, also included in the \$49,262 of travel expenses filed by the former Minister of Energy and his entourage was \$1.69 for a Twix chocolate bar, \$2.99 for a Tutti-Frutti candy bar and \$4.10 for a bag of almonds. Apparently your former Minister of Energy, promoted by you now to oversee the books of the province, feels entitled to charge taxpayers for chocolate bars. Yesterday, former Liberal minister David Dingwall defended his outrageous expenses and his claim to a half-million-dollar severance by saying, "I'm entitled to my entitlements."

My question is simple: Do your Liberal ministers follow David Dingwall's lead, thinking they are entitled to charge taxpayers for chocolate bars and bags of almonds? Is that your standard?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** The member opposite may not recall, but when they were in government they insisted that these kinds of expenditures be reviewed by the Integrity Commissioner. In fact, that is exactly what has been done. The expenses have all been approved by the Integrity Commissioner.

Our former Minister of Energy, like this Minister of Energy, are both seized with the issue before us, which is to ensure that during the course of the next 15 years we replace, renew or refurbish 25,000 megawatts of energy. That is exactly the job they have taken on, and they will be most aggressive in pursuing that particular responsibility.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke):** My question is also for the Premier. Apparently these Liberals here are no better than their cousins in Ottawa. Incredibly, disgraced former Liberal minister David Dingwall, forced to resign from his patronage post at the Canadian mint, feels entitled to his expenses and a half-million-dollar severance. Now we see, given your answers today, that your standards are regrettably the same. All Liberals seem to read from the same book: The David Dingwall Guide to Ratcheting Up Expenses. What



else could explain your former Minister of Energy's gall in feeling entitled to charge taxpayers for six \$70 steaks at one lunch? How can you possibly justify these expenses, Premier? How can you do it?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I think it's important to again understand the nature of the challenge before all of us. We're talking about 25,000 megawatts that need to be replaced, renewed or refurbished over the course of the next 15 years. It would have been nice had this work begun some eight or 10 years ago, but it did not. So what we have undertaken to do is tackle that head-on. We already have brought on 2,200 megawatts of new energy; there are another 9,000 megawatts in the pipeline. We are in the process of expanding capacity at Niagara Falls, we recently entered into a new agreement with Bruce Power and we are doing other things to ensure that the people of Ontario can rely on a decent electricity supply.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** You know, if we could build the right kind of generator, Premier, we could probably fire it for a while just on the table scraps from that minister's lunch.

My supplementary: First, former Liberal minister David Dingwall says he is entitled to his entitlements. Now we see your Liberal ministers living large by the same rule. One expense claim by your former energy minister's top political aide shows he charged \$4.95 for a magazine listed as "for the minister." Premier, at a time when energy customers are struggling to pay their hydro bills and receiving a too-little, too-late one-time credit from you, do you think it's justified that your former energy minister, now your most senior minister, feels he is entitled to have taxpayers pick up the tab for a \$5 magazine?

1420

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** Again, I think what is important here is that Ontarians understand that they have a government that is prepared to take responsibility for expanding capacity and supply of electricity in Ontario. By way of specifics, we are bringing 9,000 megawatts on-line. That's in the pipeline at present. Pickering A, unit 1, will provide us with 515 more megawatts, and Bruce A, units 1 and 2, 1,540 more. Niagara tunnel will give us 200 megawatts of additional supply. We have in excess of 1,500 megawatts coming from renewables. We've got co-generation to the tune of 1,000 megawatts. We have demand-side management and demand response initiatives that will result in 250 megawatts being saved. Now, I think that is very important information for the people of Ontario.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I saw the former Chair of Management Board mouth to the Premier, "People don't care about that stuff." Well, they do care about that stuff. They care deeply about that stuff. You know, in my riding most people have never been and will never be able to go out and afford a \$70 steak. It does matter to them.

Premier, the culture of entitlement that exists among Liberal politicians is truly shocking: David Dingwall, Dwight Duncan, dining delectably. Your former Minister

of Energy racked up \$49,262 in expenses for just over one week in Europe. He traveled with a four-person entourage; that works out to \$5,500 a day for 9 days. Included in that is a magazine for \$5, a \$1.69 Twix chocolate bar, a lunch that cost—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** I'm not sure it was a question, Speaker, so much as a rant.

I think the important thing here is that the Integrity Commissioner is charged with the special responsibility of reviewing expenses submitted. Those have been submitted and they have been approved. The member opposite is, by nature of his responsibilities, necessarily partisan and I appreciate the way he places the argument that he makes today, but I think Ontarians are entitled to rely on the judgment of an objective, impartial third party; that is, the Integrity Commissioner. He has reviewed these expenses and he has deemed them to be appropriate.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is to the Premier. I think everyone in Ontario is concerned about public health, so when the director of infection control of the University Health Network and Toronto emergency services officials warn that there will be a pandemic, that one in 100 could die, that we will be using arenas as morgues and running crematoria 24 hours a day, people are rightly concerned. Premier, can you assure the people of Ontario that your government has a plan to protect front-line health workers, and in particular, can you assure Ontarians that the McGuinty government is 100% committed to public health protection programs in the province?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** For the Minister of Health.

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** Not only do we have a plan; it's called the Ontario health pandemic influenza plan, and for interested individuals, it's available on our ministry's Web site. I think this is an important element of disclosure. Obviously, in an environment where there's lots of discussion about a pandemic, with a lot of uncertainty, frankly, about what the toll of that will be, it's important to provide people with timely information. We are making that transparent and it's on the Web site now. We're operating on the basis that it should never be deemed as finalized. We call it an evergreen plan, which means that when we finish one draft of it, we instantly begin to work on the subsequent one.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** That's funny.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The honourable member from Trinity-Spadina thinks that's funny, but over here, we are dedicated to the view that the public health of Ontarians dictates that we constantly improve on the

work that has been done. In supplementary, I'll provide more information to the honourable member.

**Mr. Hampton:** Experts warn that an avian flu pandemic could kill one in 100 people in Ontario. I think what people would find troubling is that yesterday the minister basically admitted that this new agency specializing in pandemic response won't be up and running until some time in 2006. The people of Ontario need to know now that Ontario has a clear plan and that the McGuinty government can actually carry out that plan.

I want to ask the Premier again: Can you assure the people of Ontario that your government will provide unwavering support to local public health agencies that will be the front-line defenders, that will be doing the front-line work, should we have an avian flu pandemic?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Unlike the honourable member and the record of his party in government, we already have. We've worked hard as a government to make hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment in public health. We've worked hard to be a government that builds off the advice that's provided to us; as an example, by Justice Archie Campbell. In his second report, Justice Campbell acknowledged that the McGuinty government has undertaken the major changes to public health that he recommended. Here's a quote from him: "The government accepted the recommendations and committed itself to implement them in an ambitious three-year program. Improvements have so far been significant." Evidence of that is the same report the honourable member speaks of, that came out yesterday, with one of the co-chairs being Terry Sullivan from Cancer Care Ontario, giving advice to the government on the creation of a new public health agency for Ontario, the next step and a further piece of evidence of our commitment to underscore the value of public health again in our province.

**Mr. Hampton:** In response to the SARS crisis, Mr. McGuinty promised to make public health a number one priority. In fact, this government said you would fund 75% of public health costs, up from 50% of health costs. As the Premier knows, much of the public health work is established in mandatory programs. Public health units have no choice; they have to meet these programs. I want to tell you what's happened in the northwestern health unit. They went to the municipalities. The municipalities contributed the money to allow the health unit to do their job and then they asked the Ministry of Health for their contribution. The Ministry of Health said, "Oh, no, our contribution is capped."

I want to ask the Premier, does that sound like a full commitment on the part of the McGuinty government to protect public health in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The honourable member would be much more helpful if he brought some evidence to the floor. The reality is that public health budgets, the provincial contribution, beyond the fact that we're in the midst of uploading public health costs, beyond that—

**Interjection:** Uploading.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Yes, uploading. That's a new word around here. We have a 9% increase of the provincial support for those public health budgets in Ontario. On the issue of confidence, the thing I would point Ontarians to the most is that there was a story yesterday about the federal government's distribution of Tamiflu to provinces. Some people ask, why was Ontario's contribution so low on a per capita basis? Long before the federal government and other provinces decided that it would be prudent to stock up on Tamiflu, Ontario had already bought and received those same supplies. Accordingly, rather than the federal government having to transfer a supply of Tamiflu to Ontario, they merely paid us for what we had already bought—prudent health protection.

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** New question.

**Mr. Hampton:** To the Premier again: Here's what's troubling. The chief medical officer of health in northwestern Ontario knows what has to be done to meet those mandatory programs of public health protection. He has established what the budget needs to be. The municipalities have made their contribution. He goes to the McGuinty government and says, "To meet your 55% contribution, this is what it will be," and he is told by the McGuinty government, "Oh, no, we're not going to cover that amount. We have capped what we're going to contribute."

What it means is they now have to lay off staff. What it means is they will not have the staff out there and the resources there to adequately protect people should there be a flu pandemic. Premier, can you square your promises that public health protection will be a number one priority with the unwillingness now of your government to contribute the money necessary to protect public health at the local level?

1430

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** To the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Yes, I can give assurances to the honourable member of the commitment we made to the people of the province, in this province where 44 individuals lost their lives as a result of SARS, that we would be the government that fulfilled our obligation to the citizenry to learn and apply all of those lessons that could be learned and applied. Accordingly, we've operated on the direction that was provided by Dr. David Walker, the dean of health sciences. As a result, we've asked him to renew his efforts in looking into the situation at Seven Oaks because we want to build on the work that has been done.

The honourable member shows up every day, decides what's media-worthy and asks his questions. But every single day we wake up at the Ministry of Health and we rededicate ourselves to rebuilding the public health infrastructure that was allowed, over a 20-year period, to decline.

Operation Health Protection has several elements, and I'd be happy to speak about the issue of mandatory programs in my subsequent opportunity.



**Mr. Hampton:** When a foremost public health official in the province warns of a flu pandemic where one in 100 could die, I think it's a little more than just of media interest, Minister of Health.

Here's the reality. Joining us today in the visitors' gallery are representatives from the Association of Local Public Health Agencies. The agencies warn that local boards of health are underfunded, are unable to deliver their minimum mandated programs, like vaccinations and restaurant inspections, and are vulnerable to public health threats. They also say that the McGuinty government has reneged on its very public promise to fund public health units properly.

Can the Premier explain how he expects these boards of health to lead the fight against avian flu when you've deprived them of the resources to provide minimum mandated programs?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** The honourable member, in seeking to contribute whatever it is he's seeking to contribute to the discussion, isn't bringing much factual information. The circumstances are clear, that a flu pandemic—any that affects us—will require that all hands be on deck, will require that we have a coordinated response as it relates to that. We've been working through the Ontario plan to be able to do that.

On the issue of mandatory programs, what the honourable member has not offered today is that there is currently a review of mandatory programs going on. Health officials, some of these very same ones he speaks to, are currently engaged across the province, working to make sure that there is consistency in mandatory programs, because before our government began to upload the costs related to public health, municipalities with various levels of taxation capacity were asked to deliver these programs. Accordingly, we seek to ensure that all Ontarians, no matter where they are in this vast province, have the same level of mandatory programs. Our commitment is clear: It's hundreds of millions of dollars. It's a significant investment in human resource to enhance our capacity—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Hampton:** Here is the reality for public health units, and it is the public health units who will be out there on the front line. It's the public health units who will be doing the work.

They were told by the McGuinty government that the McGuinty government would meet their costs of providing mandatory programs. The municipalities have contributed their money, but when they come back to the McGuinty government and they say, "Honour your promise. This is what we need to provide these mandated programs," what they're told, after the microphones have been turned off and the television cameras are no longer there, is that the money is not going to be forthcoming.

Let me ask the Premier again today: We've heard your promises, Premier. Will you commit that you will keep those promises? Will you commit that these public health units will get the money you promised them and that they

need in order to protect Ontarians from a potential flu pandemic?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** As I had the chance to say earlier, public health budgets in the province of Ontario, beyond that portion of the budget which we are in the midst of uploading, are going up by 9% this year.

The honourable member likes to speak about employment reductions. Maybe the member in the back row from Toronto could help to get him some intelligence from Toronto Public Health that during the discussions in the preliminary efforts to build the city of Toronto's budget, Toronto Public Health was indicating—I'm going by memory here—additional hiring to the tune of 326 people. This is evidence that the investments we're making on behalf of the people of Ontario are delivering the results required.

Do we have concerns around a pandemic? Of course we do. Accordingly, we're building a health care system that brings the elements of the system together—everybody working together. That's why we have a pandemic influenza plan as part of Operation Health Protection. That's why we're building a public health agency in this province. I believe all honourable members should go on our Web site, take a look at that plan and—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

#### CRIME PREVENTION

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** My question is for the Premier, in the absence of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Gun violence and gang-related crime have reached an epidemic here in Ontario. Today, we unanimously passed in this House a resolution from the member for Etobicoke North, asking the government to urgently address the issue of violence, gang-related crime and the illegal use of firearms. Premier, can you inform the House exactly what actions your government has taken to date to convince our federal government to get tough on crime and the penalties associated with crime?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The Attorney General would like to speak to this.

**Hon. Michael Bryant (Attorney General):** Last January at the federal-provincial-territorial justice ministers' meeting, I think it's fair to say that Ontario led the charge with other provinces to obtain the kind of changes to the Criminal Code and sentencing rules that would see, for example, mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes. In addition to that, this coming November we are pursuing another federal-provincial-territorial ministers' meeting. I have now spoken with every provincial attorney and the federal attorney, as we are gathering a consensus to get the changes that need to be made in Parliament so that we can have meaningful, effective punishments for these horrific crimes that are a scourge to a civil society.

**Mr. Dunlop:** It's disappointing that a member of your caucus has to bring a resolution forward on this, but I wanted to ask you if you can inform the House today

exactly what meetings or actions you are planning in the immediate future to convince our federal government to get tough on crime.

**Interjection:** He just told us.

**Mr. Dunlop:** No, I'm talking about the kinds of questions you are going to ask, the kinds of answers we expect in this House. We are following what has become an epidemic here in Ontario. This is a serious issue. You can laugh and heckle all you want in here, but we're talking about people who are being shot with guns every day. I want to know exactly what you're planning, and will you report those actions to the House as soon as possible?

**Hon. Mr. Bryant:** Absolutely nobody in this House is laughing and heckling about this matter. This is one of the most serious matters we could deal with in this Legislature. It was in the spirit of that seriousness, it was in the spirit of representing his constituency, it was in the spirit of being an active member of this House that the member for Etobicoke North brought that resolution to this House.

I believe that in addition to the efforts by the Ministry of the Attorney General and the government, this Legislature needs to send the message to parliamentarians at every opportunity that we understand there are challenges in a minority Parliament but this is a serious matter and we are doing everything within our power, through intergovernmental mechanisms, by talking to Attorneys General, by talking to the federal government, to send the message loud and clear: mandatory minimum sentences for gun crimes. Let's start getting—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. New question.

1440

## FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL POLICIES

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** My question is to the Premier. On Monday, you told the press that any new money you receive from the federal government would go to business tax cuts. This is at a time here in Ontario when seniors are facing whopping property tax increases. It's at a time when working—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Order. Stop the clock. The member for Beaches–East York has the floor. He's the only one entitled to speak.

**Mr. Prue:** It's a time when ordinary working couples are paying between \$1,200 and \$1,800 more because of your regressive health tax, and it's a time when record profits are being made by the big banks and oil companies that will surely be the largest beneficiary of your largesse. How can you justify these priorities?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** I'm sure the member opposite will not be surprised to hear me say that I never said any such thing. We have a real issue with the federal government and I want to thank the member for his

support and the support of his party in this regard. It's the \$23-billion gap. This year the people of Ontario will send \$23 billion to the federal government for distribution in the rest of the country. We are proud to support everything from surgeries in Sydney and St. John's, to training in Moncton and Montreal, to post-secondary education in Winnipeg and Whitehorse, and we will never abdicate our responsibility to lend support to good quality public services around the country. But \$23 billion is too much, especially given that that figure was \$2 billion just 10 years ago. What I was talking about was the \$23-billion gap.

**Mr. Prue:** Here it is, right here—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Prue:** No, I'm not going to apologize. I'm going to say that this has been reported in not one, but two Toronto newspapers and you have been—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Stop the clock. It won't surprise you that I'm having some difficulty hearing the member for Beaches–East York. I would like to hear his question.

**Mr. Prue:** I can just quote what the Toronto Sun has reported, that "he says he might consider reducing taxes if the federal government addressed a so-called \$23-billion gap between what Ontario pays Ottawa and what the province gets back." The truth of the matter is that, if that is your statement, you are totally out of whack with what ordinary, average Ontarians are expecting. These are the same Ontarians who are seeing double-digit increases in their hydro bills, it's the same Ontarians who are being hosed at the gas pumps, and it's the same Ontarians who are looking to you for relief. If you get the \$23 billion, can you give priority to these people before the banks and the oil companies?

**Hon. Mr. McGuinty:** As I said yesterday, if we receive \$23 billion from the federal government, that will create all kinds of new options that are not on the table at present. I'm sure we will be able to address some of the issues raised by my good friend opposite, I'm sure we'll be able to address some of the issues raised by the official opposition, and we'll be able to address all kinds of issues raised by us on this side of the House. Until that day arrives, I would suggest to my friend opposite that we will remain very much focused on our plan. He understands that is found in our recent throne speech. We are continuing to build up this province by building up Ontarians, but especially by investing in their education, their skills, their health care, drawing upon their creative talents and making sure that we're getting the fundamentals right. That includes everything from electricity to ensuring that we're investing in infrastructure and to ensuring we are bringing real fiscal discipline to the management of our province.

## IMMIGRANTS' SKILLS

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** I have a question for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. This week we welcomed over 1,000 ethnocultural leaders and



organizations to Toronto, to the Metropolis Conference. I know you spoke about the importance of diversity at this conference and you pointed out, and I might add quite effectively, how diversity is important to Ontario and to the citizens of this city. Today at this conference, the Metropolis Conference, the Royal Bank Financial Group is releasing a report, *The Diversity Advantage: A Case for Canada's 21st Century Economy*. Minister, do you agree with this report and the conclusion that tapping into the skills and knowledge of our immigrants is needed to support Canada's economy, and certainly the economy of Ontario?

**Hon. Mike Colle (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration):** I'd like to thank the honourable member from Davenport, who has been a lifelong advocate and a real pit bull when it comes to standing up for newcomers and immigrants. I would like to thank him for that.

The Metropolis Conference, which is taking place at the convention centre in Toronto, is bringing people from all over the world who have centred on the importance of leveraging diversity to an economic and social advantage. The Royal Bank of Canada report reaffirms that what the Premier did in asking for fair funding and fair investment for our newcomers here in Ontario in his \$23-billion gap campaign is the right thing to do. In other words, if Ottawa spends that money here in Ontario to help our newcomers succeed, not only do the newcomers succeed, but the Ontario economy succeeds.

**Mr. Ruprecht:** We are joined today by a delegation from the Sikh community, the South Asian Seniors, and we would agree that immigration is Ontario's great advantage.

I represent a riding made up of people with diverse immigrant backgrounds. Every year, Ontario receives over half of Canada's newcomers, with the majority of them choosing to settle right here in the GTA. In fact, over the past three years—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Ruprecht:** I hope they settle down and listen to my final supplementary, but if they don't, the pit bull is going to get them.

In fact, over the past three years, there has been a 52% increase in immigrants to the 905 area. What is this government doing to help ensure that newcomers are able to settle successfully, be it in the GTA, in Ontario or in Davenport, which is my riding?

**Hon. Mr. Colle:** Again, the member from Davenport knows full well that we welcome 125,000 newcomers into Ontario every year. That's the same population as the province of Prince Edward Island. Last year, 125,000 came, this year 125,000 are welcome and next year—that's why we have to give them that help in English-as-a-second-language, as we are doing, and in bridge training, so nurses can get that. Their success rates in applications for certification in Ontario have increased up to 70% or 80%, the same as pharmacists who get that help from Ontario programs.

We have to do more, and the federal government has recognized that. We will continue to get rid of those

barriers and make immigration integration a priority of this government.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer (Kitchener–Waterloo):** My question is for the Minister of Health. Your government's decision to shelve the \$70-million expansion of Cambridge Memorial Hospital for at least five years puts on hold the construction of 23 secure mental health schedule 1 beds where patients can legally be admitted involuntarily. If approval is not provided for the schedule 1 facility, not only will people like Ann Sheldon, a retired nurse, have to continue to be treated outside of their community in places such as London, but the psychiatrists have also indicated that they may leave.

I ask you, Minister—and don't give the question to the minister of infrastructure because we're talking about health care needs—why are you going to deny the people of Cambridge access to desperately needed mental health beds and services?

**Hon. George Smitherman (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** It would be well-known to the honourable member, because I was privileged to be able to make an announcement in her riding related to our government's very significant support for capital development in the Kitchener-Waterloo area. Part and parcel of that announcement included support for development at the Freeport site of Grand River Hospital. That includes the transfer of 50 beds of a mental health variety back from London. I think that helps make the point.

While there is significantly more work to do, and we're the first to acknowledge it, our message to the people of Cambridge is we agree that that's a much-needed hospital. The Premier has been clear in saying that for us it is not a matter of if, but when, and I'm looking forward to an opportunity to meet very soon with the ministry and the hospital to begin to discuss possibilities. We've been open in saying that we want to be as creative and flexible as we can, albeit within the constraints we have that have been well enumerated by my colleague the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

We know that mental health is an important challenge. That's why we've already made this significant investment in your region. There is always more to do and we're going to get it done.

1450

**Mrs. Witmer:** As the minister knows, the beds he referred to in the announcement he made are not going to start to be available for at least two years, and probably much longer, because construction is not going to start for at least two more years.

I want to talk to you about another impact that your refusal to provide funding is going to cause: It's going to have an impact on ambulance service. John Prno, the head of our ambulance service, has said that because you're not going to increase emergency room beds from 19 to 48, it's going to slow ambulance response times,

delay the unloading of patients and result in more transfers to other hospitals.

Some patients are already waiting 90 minutes to be unloaded. It means that the ambulances are not available to do other calls and it slows down ambulance response times. I ask you, will you put the needs of patients in Cambridge first and reconsider your decision not to provide funding to the Cambridge hospital to the tune of \$70 million?

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** I know that the honourable member never likes the approach when she is reminded that she was the longest-serving Minister of Health in the previous government.

**Mrs. Witmer:** Actually, I'm very proud of that.

**Hon. Mr. Smitherman:** Well, you should have gotten a bit more done. The reality is that I'm pretty sure she had the opportunity to participate in announcements related to the very same capital project that she is speaking about. The point is that what we inherited from the previous government, which her leader is on record in Cambridge as acknowledging, is that they ran around all over Ontario and heightened expectations beyond those that could be matched, from a construction standpoint and a fiscal standpoint. We're working hard to address those.

With respect to ambulance off-load delays, I believe that our investments in the Kitchener-Waterloo community—family health teams, community health centres, an end-of-life palliative care strategy and a reinvestment in community-based care of an unprecedented variety—are going to have a significant impact on those challenges that are currently experienced in hospital emergency rooms.

### FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is to the Premier. You have been announcing and reannouncing with much fanfare that you have a \$680-million strategy to help the forest sector in the province of Ontario. You have been announcing and reannouncing it since the spring. Yet tomorrow in the city of Kenora, Abitibi Consolidated is going to shut down their paper mill and lay off 360 people, which will be devastating to the community.

Premier, you announced this \$680 million. Can you tell me, why are these paper mill shutdowns happening if your forest policy and your forest response strategy is such a good one? Why are so many of these mills shutting down?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** As the local member knows, because Kenora is in his constituency, we have successfully completed discussions with Abitibi Consolidated in regard to the Kenora operation. They left, with the successful completion, that they knew they had a plan that they could run number 10

machine with low electricity rates and lower fibre rates, and decided to go to the workers to discuss how the workers could contribute to the future of keeping number 10 machine going.

I met with the union yesterday. Basically, their attitude is that Kenora is going to be their beachhead. I asked them, when they said that, "Do you not think there's going to be some transition, some change in this industry?" They said, "It's two machines or no machines." I think that's sad for the town of Kenora.

**Mr. Hampton:** We've heard the McGuinty government say that these are global forces. They're not global forces. Mills are opening in British Columbia, mills are expanding in Quebec, and Manitoba has put out a proposal for a new mill, yet what we hear from the McGuinty government in one breath is, "These are global forces." The latest chapter is, "Blame the workers."

Here is the reality for the Kenora mill. They've got a very good market. There are newspapers in the United States, in the Midwest, that want to buy their paper. They've got a very experienced workforce. They've got a wood fibre basket that other paper mills in North America would give their right arm for. Do you know what they don't have? They're paying \$80 a megawatt for electricity that is produced at \$10 a megawatt at power dams that are 20 kilometres down the river. That's happening not because of something that's going on in Europe or Asia; it's happening because of McGuinty government policy.

Let me tell you, it's shameful now for you to come in here and try to blame the workers. When are we going to see the McGuinty government address the real issue? You're forcing—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** The question has been asked.

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Of course, this is not the case at all, because under the arrangement they have with the Ontario government in building the cogeneration plant, they are going to have low, competitive electricity rates at that mill, and that's what's going to sustain them.

To say this is not an international situation, how come there are mills closing in Newfoundland with very cheap power, and in Quebec? In Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, which is always cited as an example of the cheapest delivered wood costs in the country, Weyerhaeuser announces 650 jobs down the drain, where Weyerhaeuser is today putting out paper in Dryden in northwestern Ontario. So that tells you something, that Ontario is adjusting to this, is reacting to this. We all have to work together to do that, and we have to work with the unions and the companies and the communities to make for a successful outcome.

### CONTAMINATED PROPERTY

**Mr. Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. On January 30 of this year, you accepted my invitation to come to the town of Hawkesbury and



discuss an issue that is extremely important for the health and well-being of that community. During your visit, we toured the former CIP paper mill's industrial lagoon, which closed down in the mid-1980s, when the wet lagoon became the property of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Shortly after its closure, the CIP company received approval from the Ministry of the Environment to use the wet lagoon as an official waste disposal site for demolition material.

Minister, I was thrilled that you had committed to clean up the site of the contaminated wet lagoon. Just a few short days after your visit, ministry officials were already on the phone with the town of Hawkesbury. Can you tell the House today what has been done since your visit to Hawkesbury?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I very much appreciated the invitation from the member to visit Hawkesbury. Quite frankly, I was shocked by the situation that I had seen: basically nobody taking some ownership for mitigating the pollution in that lagoon. It stopped all waterside investment and development in that particular community. So I decided that MNR should take the lead in that, and we're working with our colleagues in the Ministry of the Environment. Just the other day, we secured the funding. We have a team leader in charge of the project now, and I would say we'll have a successful conclusion to the cleanup of this waterfront area.

**Mr. Lalonde:** This is great news for the town of Hawkesbury. The CIP lagoon cleanup has been my number one priority ever since I first got elected. Subsequent governments had not given any attention to this utmost important issue to the town of Hawkesbury. On the other hand, the McGuinty government understands that cleaning up the industrial site located along the Ottawa River will lift a barrier that has been hindering Hawkesbury in the development of its waterfront.

Minister, this has been a long time coming. You understood immediately the strategic location of Hawkesbury, which is located at the most eastern tip of Ontario. The community is excited, and you can surely understand their surprise that it's now actually happening. Can you please reassure this House what your ministry is doing to ensure that we are fulfilling our commitment to the town of Hawkesbury?

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** I'm very pleased to be working with the local member on this situation. I think it's interesting to note that this polluted lagoon has basically frozen any development in the area. I know on the island just offshore there was an opportunity there for some recreational and condominium developments, but of course that particular project didn't get off the ground if they didn't have assurance that the mainland wasn't polluted. What we've done is to act as a catalyst in this situation. By starting to clean up the lagoon, we're starting to add value to all the property in the area. I think, through the added value of the property that the town has assumed, it will now start to pay for the

mitigation. In the end, I think we're going to be able to do this where the added value in the property will generate the revenue to do the clean-up. In the end, I don't think there'll be very much taxpayers' money having to go into this at all. It's really going to be a win-win for all concerned.

1500

## FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. The forest industry is in crisis. All over northern Ontario, entire communities are being affected. Norampac, in Red Rock, is shutting down a machine. Abitibi Consolidated workers have been here at Queen's Park all week fighting for their jobs. Their last paper machine is scheduled to shut down next week. I could go through a long list of other closures.

Our delivered wood costs are the highest in the world at \$55 US a cubic metre. So far, your response, your two announcements, will lower delivered wood costs by \$1 US per cubic metre. That's not much help for northern communities fighting to survive. Minister, when are you going to get serious about the crisis in the forestry sector?

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I would have to say to the member that it is a more complicated issue than just the cost of delivered wood, which is an impact, no doubt, on our companies. But the example that was always given to me in the competitive council report was Saskatchewan, which actually has very inexpensive delivered wood costs of around \$35 a cubic metre. It was just two weeks ago that Weyerhaeuser announced the closing of their paper mill there in Prince Albert, putting over 690 employees out of work. And yet there's a jurisdiction with average electricity costs and very low delivered wood costs. So it's a very comprehensive and complicated problem. I spent Friday going around to all the different forest companies in Ontario to have discussions with them about how we can work together on a one-on-one basis with our new program. I wanted to make sure they understood the program and that they would be participants in using that program to restructure this industry.

**Mr. Miller:** Minister, in my riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka, employees of Tembec are in fear for their livelihood. In fact, in recent weeks, I've had 50 letters from different workers there. Tembec needs its \$300 million tied up in softwood lumber duties freed up, and I would ask you to lobby the federal minister to do just that.

But today I'd like to talk about your response to the crisis in the forestry sector, Minister. The municipal council of Timmins has passed a resolution because this is such an important issue. They call your announcement a baby step in the right direction, but they also point out that the \$28 million for primary road maintenance does not even cover the recent escalation of fuel costs.

Minister, are you going to take the advice of your expert council on forest sector competitiveness and fund 100% of primary roads and 50% of secondary roads costs, as they suggested?

**Hon. David Ramsay:** I would say \$680 million is some baby. That was one heck of a step we took with that. It's the largest sectoral contribution the McGuinty government has made to the economy and the development of the economy in the province of Ontario.

I say to the member that we are continuing to work with the industry to make sure this transition happens as effectively and as efficiently as possible and to make sure with as little disruption as possible. I thank the member for the support in lobbying the federal government, which I have been doing. I'd ask him also to send letters to the federal government, because our sawmillers in particular need a loan guarantee from the export development corporation that the federal government can make happen just like that, to make sure that they can now borrow against those duties on deposit in the United States. That is a very important issue, or we're going to have some real problems right across this country. I thank the member for that support, and I'm making sure that the federal government hears that message also.

#### STEEL INDUSTRY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** My question is to the Premier. On September 30, Peter Hyde, director of Hamilton Specialty Bar, told you in an urgent letter that without direct and positive action from your government, the company and its 400 steelworkers are about to hit the wall. In the first five days of October, your exorbitant hydro prices forced the company to stop production for a full 24 hours. In the last six months, the furnace was off for 214 hours. That's a 500% increase over 2002 and 2003. That's lost production time.

Premier, while your government does nothing on this hydro crisis, everyone pays the price: the company, the workers, the community and the rest of the province. Have you taken the time to schedule a meeting with Hamilton Specialty Bar, and if not, why not?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

**Hon. Joseph Cordiano (Minister of Economic Development and Trade):** We're talking to Hamilton Specialty Bar through my ministry. We're talking to a number of people in the steel industry. There are ongoing difficulties in the steel industry, and we'd be happy and delighted to continue these discussions. The fact of the matter is that the steel industry continues to go through a restructuring, even though steel prices have gone up at some point. With respect to restructuring, it is an ongoing matter, and we will continue to monitor what's taking place.

We appointed Jim Arnett, the Premier's special adviser for the industry. He is going to be reporting back on a number of fronts, including Stelco, with respect to

what's going on in the steel industry. We continue, as I say, to monitor and look forward to discussions.

**Ms. Horwath:** Premier, your minister is obviously not aware of this critical situation. The people of Hamilton and of the province are hurting financially from your lack of action and your broken promises on hydro. That tiny hydro rebate that you announced may send some small message, but it won't be helping the workers in the mill, who are not going to be able to begin to cover the hours they've lost just this month in terms of their wages.

Your broken hydro promises have put Hamilton Specialty Bar and manufacturers across southern Ontario at risk because they simply can't afford the power. When steel mills in Steeltown can't fire their furnaces because they can't afford the electricity, we've got a problem in this province.

Premier, when is your plan for Hamilton Specialty Bar going to come to the forefront, and when are its workers and the community going to be able to understand what is going to happen with Ontario's hydro policy?

**Hon. Mr. Cordiano:** With respect to electricity prices, in fact electricity costs for large industry and commercial users in Ontario are in line with neighbouring Great Lakes states such as New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan. In fact, we're almost two cents per kilowatt hour lower than California, so I don't know what you're talking about with respect to manufacturing. We have to compare to our peer jurisdictions; that's really being competitive. The Great Lakes states are our competitors, and we're being very competitive when it comes to electricity costs.

There is no doubt that electricity costs have gone up for large industrial users. But we were subsidizing electricity costs, and we have to move forward. We do need additional power. The Minister of Energy is doing everything to ensure that we have new supply coming on stream. That way, we can remain competitive with other jurisdictions, and I think they're doing a great job in energy.

1510

#### SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex):** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Minister, you've already said that approximately 800,000 kids travel to and from school every day on buses in this province. I know all the members of this House understand how terribly important it is that they remain safe.

I also want to take just a moment to acknowledge the work of the MPP for Chatham-Kent-Essex, Pat Hoy, and the MPP for Prince Edward-Hastings and their dedication in bringing this issue to the fruition we now have.

Research shows that Ontario has the safest roads in North America, yet almost 1,000 children and young people are injured or killed on these roads every year. Many of those accidents are preventable. What steps are being taken by the government to ensure that our children



and young people are safe when they travel to school or on school buses?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation):** I want to thank the member from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex for her question and also for her support in this area. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the member from Chatham as well.

As the member mentioned, about 800,000 students take the school bus every day. What people sometimes don't know is that most of the fatal accidents do happen when the students are either getting off the bus or on the bus. So our government has taken a lot of steps to promote school bus safety, and I just want to talk about two of those measures that we have taken. One is that, effective September 1, we will have safety crossing arms mandatory on all new school buses. The other thing we're doing is that we wanted to make sure—

**The Speaker (Hon. Michael A. Brown):** Thank you. I'm sure you'll get to it. Supplementary?

**Mrs. Van Bommel:** Minister, you have said that vehicle owners, as well as drivers, will now be charged if they pass a stopped school bus. I think it is essential that we as a government do all that we can to protect our children, and so by doing that, make it the responsibility of the public, as well as the drivers, to ensure that everyone stops for buses.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, and I say it takes a community to ensure that we get our children around safely. Minister, how will the law make it legal for vehicle owners to be charged, as well as drivers, and what is the fine for passing a stopped school bus?

**Hon. Mr. Takhar:** I want to thank the member again for her question. Let me say that in a recent survey of the drivers who drive school buses, 33% of them indicate that at least one person illegally passes the school bus every day. That is absolutely unacceptable from our point of view, and that's why we introduced the legislation that got passed last year.

As the member said, it takes a community to ensure our children are safe. That's exactly what we are doing by making the vehicle owner, as well as the driver of the car, responsible when a car illegally passes a school bus. Our goal is to significantly reduce the number of people illegally passing school buses and make everyone more accountable.

What are the fines? We have very stiff penalties. For a first-time conviction, the fine will range from \$400 to \$2,000, and for subsequent ones, it will go from \$1,000 to \$4,000. Drivers will also be subject to a maximum of six—

**The Speaker:** Thank you. New question.

## TOURISM

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** My question is for the Premier. Yesterday, Statistics Canada disclosed the fact that in August the number of American visitors to Canada fell to a 26-year low. Would the Premier not agree that this shocking fact demonstrates

the utter failure of the Liberal government's tourism marketing efforts?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** To the Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** I'm glad you asked that question. I'm glad you got it on, Ted, because you use the word "Canada," visits to Canada, and I agree with you. In terms of visits to Canada, there has been a significant drop in the month of August of this year, which had some very special conditions happening in the United States.

We, of course, throughout North America had very high gas prices that were arising. We also have the dollar increasing tremendously. But I want to tell the member that as late as yesterday I was at a conference with the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp., with all the key players in the field of tourism. We were developing some new policies to meet this new threat. Overall in the year, you would know there has been some significant improvement this year. But we are looking at that.

I called the federal minister just yesterday to convene a national ministers' policy conference, because I think it's a problem that confronts our whole country.

## PETITIONS

### CANCER TREATMENT

**Mr. Cameron Jackson (Burlington):** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario has an inconsistent policy for access to new cancer treatments while these drugs are under review for funding; and

"Whereas cancer patients taking oral chemotherapy may apply for a section 8 exception under the Ontario drug benefit plan with no such exception policy in place for intravenous cancer drugs administered in hospital; and

"Whereas this is an inequitable, inconsistent and unfair policy, creating two classes of cancer patients" in Ontario "with further inequities on the basis of personal wealth and the willingness of hospitals to risk budgetary deficits to provide new intravenous chemotherapy treatments" for cancer patients; "and

"Whereas cancer patients have the right to the most effective care recommended by their doctors;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario to provide immediate access to Velcade and other intravenous chemotherapy while these new cancer drugs are under review and provide a consistent policy for access to new cancer treatments that enables oncologists to apply for exceptions to meet the needs of patients" in Ontario.

This has been signed by Suzanne Aucoin, who was here at the Legislature on Monday. It has my signature of support and that of my constituent George Petrunas.

#### DRIVER PENALTIES

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** I have a petition here that actually was given to you, Mr. Speaker, in your capacity as the member from Algoma–Manitoulin, which I would like to read into the record. It reads as follows:

“Whereas there currently exists an inequity in penalties under the Highway Traffic Act, whereby a driver causing death or grievous harm to another due to unsafe turn or other act may only see a maximum \$500 fine, and such is an inadequate penalty;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to pass into law the Highway Traffic Act amendment, as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, which calls for stiffer penalties for drivers involved in fatal accidents where their error caused fatality.”

I am in agreement and would affix my signature as well.

#### HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition here from my constituents and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the speech from the throne was delivered in the Legislature on October 12, 2005;

“Whereas our government has worked tremendously hard to reduce the \$5.6-billion deficit we inherited from the previous government down to \$1.6 billion;

“Whereas the government, through the throne speech and the budget, has committed to a record \$6.2-billion multi-year plan to fund our colleges and universities;

“Whereas the government has launched a five-year, \$30-billion plan to improve our province’s infrastructure;

“Whereas Ontario is seeing dramatic increases in the number of CT scans, cancer surgeries, cardiac procedures and MRI scans that are producing shorter wait times for these critical health care services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To support the McGuinty government’s plan for progress as outlined in the speech from the throne.”

I agree with this petition and affix my signature to it.

#### ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling (Lanark–Carleton):** This is a petition from a number of residents of Stratford, Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Bill 183, the Adoption Information Disclosure Act, 2005, is currently before the Ontario Legislature and, if passed into law, will give unqualified retro-

active access to adoption records, regardless of the wishes of the adoptee or birth parent, which were previously understood to be sealed in perpetuity;

“Whereas the Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian, along with every other Information and Privacy Commissioner in Canada, members of the legal community and many MPPs, have expressed great concern about Bill 183 as presently drafted and have called upon the government to amend it to include a disclosure veto provision and protect the legitimate privacy rights of thousands of Ontarians;

“Whereas the right to file a disclosure veto would introduce the element of consent for birth parents and adoptees, allowing them the same choice afforded to every other birth parent and adoptee in Canada, that being whether or not they wish to disclose their personal identifying information, without having to plead their case before a tribunal and justify their reasons for maintaining their privacy;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Not to pass Bill 183 into law without the provision of an automatic disclosure veto.”

I sign that, as I am in full agreement with it.

#### DISABLED PERSONS PARKING PERMIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches–East York):** Mr. Speaker, I have another petition that was given to you in your capacity as member for Algoma–Manitoulin, which I would like to read into the record. It’s a short one that reads as follows:

“Whereas there currently exist problems of exposure to theft and the weather when displaying a disabled person parking permit on a motorcycle while parked in a disabled parking space;

“We, the undersigned, petition our members of Parliament to promote the development of a special fixed permit, as proposed by the Bikers Rights Organization, for use by disabled persons who ride or are passengers on motorcycles, even if that requires an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act.”

I am in agreement, and I’m going to affix my signature thereto.

1520

#### HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the McGuinty government is investing \$24 billion more on our health between 2003-04 and 2007-08;

“Whereas the McGuinty government is increasing the number of family health teams to 150 by 2007-08 so that each Ontarian can have access to primary care within their own community;



"Whereas waiting times are being reduced for cancer surgeries, cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures and MRI exams; and

"Whereas the McGuinty government has banned for-profit, pay-your-way-to-the-front health care, and is ensuring publicly owned, publicly funded and publicly controlled health care in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the McGuinty government's commitment to public health care, including improved access, increased funding and greater accountability."

I agree with this petition and I'm going to sign it as well.

### GASOLINE PRICES

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads:

"Whereas gasoline prices have continued to increase at alarming rates in recent months; and

"Whereas the high and unstable gas prices across Ontario have caused confusion and unfair hardship to Ontario's drivers while also impacting the Ontario economy in key sectors such as tourism and transportation," forestry and others;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Parliament of Ontario consider an immediate gas price freeze for a temporary period until world oil prices moderate, and

"That the provincial government petition the federal Liberal government to step up to the plate and lower gas prices by removing the GST on gasoline products and fix the federal Competition Act to ensure consumers are protected and that the market operates in a fair and transparent manner."

I affix my name in full support.

### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Mr. Michael Prue (Beaches-East York):** I have a petition that reads as follows:

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and

"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I am in agreement and would affix my signature thereto.

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I was kind enough to sit down here

and wait until the member had read his first petition. Then he got a second petition and now he's getting a third petition. I'm just wondering when we are going to go in rotation here.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** I recognize the member from Davenport. Do you want to start?

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make sure that this petition gets on today because of its importance.

The petition is addressed to the Parliament of Ontario and reads as follows:

"Whereas Portuguese Canadians number 171,545 in the Toronto census metropolitan area, many of whom encounter serious barriers (language, culture and location) to accessing community and long-term-care services; and

"There are no long-term-care homes dedicated to the needs of Portuguese Canadian seniors; and

"Camões House for the Aged and Portuguese Community Centre of Toronto is proposing a partnership with a local long-term-care provider to purchase up to 160 existing beds in the Toronto area (for a nominal fee), to develop a Portuguese Canadian long-term-care home in Toronto. This partnership is tentative and is dependent on the approval of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"We encourage the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, his staff, and members of the Legislature to support the Camões proposal, and to make the appropriate administrative and policy changes required to develop a Portuguese Canadian long-term-care home in Toronto."

Since I agree with this petition 100%, I'm delighted to sign it right now.

### TUITION

**Mrs. Julia Munro (York North):** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario Liberal government took an historic step forward by funding a tuition fee freeze for two years; and

"Whereas a majority of Ontarians support increased public funding for colleges and universities as well as reduced tuition fees; and

"Whereas increasing student debt through income-contingent loan repayment schemes or raising loan limits only increases the cost of post-secondary education for students from modest means; and

"Whereas per-student investment in Ontario still lags gravely behind the vast majority of jurisdictions in North America;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, supporting the Canadian Federation of Students' call to increase funding for colleges and universities and reduce tuition fees for all

Ontario students, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reduce tuition fees for all students in Ontario, increase public funding for post-secondary education to at least the national average, and implement an upfront, needs-based grant system for Ontario full-time and part-time students."

#### MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads:

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty, MPP, as leader of the official opposition, made the following commitment: 'I have committed that a Liberal government will ensure a binding referendum is held to allow local citizens to determine whether or not to dismantle the amalgamated city'; and

"Whereas, in the interest of true democracy, the Minister of Municipal Affairs put the following question to the voters of the city of Kawartha Lakes: 'Are you in favour of a return to the previous municipal model of government with an upper-tier and 16 lower-tier municipalities?'; and

"Whereas the voters, by a clear majority on a provincially mandated ballot, answered in the affirmative; and

"Whereas the council of the city of Kawartha Lakes has demanded that the province of Ontario honour the results of the 2003 election as it pertains to the minister's question;

"The undersigned demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario act to honour the commitment made by Dalton McGuinty and to respect the will of the people as expressed in a democratic vote, and restore the former municipal structure as stated in the minister's question."

I am proud to provide this petition on behalf of the people of Kawartha Lakes.

#### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti (Scarborough Southwest):** I want to start off by apologizing to my colleague across the aisle, the member for Davenport, for taking the petition time up. Anyway, I have a petition here. I'll read it quickly:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government has contributed \$301 million to the Canada-Ontario affordable housing program;

"Whereas this program will produce 5,320 new units of affordable housing and provide rent subsidies for up to 5,000 low-income households;

"Whereas the \$116 million allocated to the city of Toronto will assist several hundred families across the city;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To support the McGuinty government's commitment to affordable housing and to urge the government to keep affordable housing on the provincial agenda."

I agree with this petition and affix my signature to it.

#### LESLIE M. FROST CENTRE

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** This is especially for the former Chair of Management Board.

"Recommendations for the Frost Centre

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the McGuinty government announced the closure of the Leslie M. Frost Natural Resources Centre in July 2004 with no public consultation; and

"Whereas public outrage over the closure of the Frost Centre caused the government to appoint a working committee of local residents to examine options for the future of the property; and

"Whereas the working committee has completed their consultations and has prepared recommendations for the provincial government that include a procedure to follow during the request for proposals process; and

"Whereas the Frost Centre has been an important educational resource for the community, and continued use of the facility for educational purposes has widespread support;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"The Dalton McGuinty Liberals should retain public ownership of the Frost Centre lands and follow the recommendations of the working committee regarding the request for proposals process."

It is signed by people from my riding.

1530

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Hon. James J. Bradley (Minister of Tourism, minister responsible for seniors, Government House Leader):** Pursuant to standing order 55, I rise to give the Legislature the business of the House for next week:

On Monday, October 24, 2005, in the afternoon, second reading of Bill 211; in the evening, reply to the speech from the throne.

On Tuesday, October 25, 2005, in the afternoon, second reading of Bill 197; in the evening, third reading of Bill 183.

On Wednesday, October 26, 2005, in the afternoon, reply to the speech from the throne; in the evening, third reading of Bill 169.

On Thursday, October 27, 2005, in the afternoon, second reading of Bill 197.

#### OPPOSITION DAY

#### FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mr. Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty



government must recognize that during the first two years of its mandate, thousands of jobs have been lost in the forest industries of northern Ontario; and

Recognize that communities are being devastated by the loss of jobs and the disintegration of local and regional economies; and

Recognize that as a result of the government's hydro-electricity policies, sawmills and pulp and paper mills in northern Ontario are forced to pay \$80 a megawatt or more for electricity that costs \$20 a megawatt or less to generate at nearby hydro dams, whereas paper mills in competing jurisdictions like Quebec or British Columbia are paying \$30 a megawatt for electricity; and

Recognize that uncompetitive electricity prices are placing Ontario's forest industries in a highly uncompetitive position; and

Immediately implement an energy strategy for northern industries and stop the electricity rate increases that put the entire northern Ontario economy at risk.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Joseph N. Tascona):** Mr. Hampton has moved opposition day number 1.

**Mr. Hampton:** This is a debate that needs to happen because if you review the events of the past two years—I want to point to the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness. What is clear from that report is that literally thousands of jobs have been lost. As the report makes clear, a total of 2,200 direct jobs have been lost over the past two years from northern Ontario forest-dependent communities, and further mill closures will be economically devastating on top of the losses to date. The report says, "Some 12 mills across northern Ontario have been identified at risk. The loss of these production facilities would reduce employment in the north by 7,500 direct jobs and 17,500 indirect and induced jobs." Further, "Southern Ontario would lose an additional 13,000 indirect jobs." Much of the engineering support work, the information technology work, the supply work and the financial services work is done in southern Ontario.

What is happening under the McGuinty government is devastating. It is devastating for communities when a paper mill is shut down and 200 or 300 people are put out of work. It is devastating when a sawmill is shut down and 100 or 200 people are put out of work. It is incredibly devastating when you consider the number of communities that have in fact been affected just over the last short while.

For example, Kenora has lost a sawmill; that was 30 jobs. Dryden has lost a sawmill—close to 200 jobs. Cascades paper in Thunder Bay has lost a paper machine—150 jobs. Red Rock has lost a paper machine—175 jobs. Neenah Paper in Terrace Bay shut down one pulp mill—150 direct jobs. Opasatika shut down a sawmill—85 jobs. Chapleau, another mill—close to 100 jobs. New Liskeard lost their mill—over 60 jobs. And the list goes on.

Why is this happening? The McGuinty government would have people believe that this is all global forces, that it is all global forces causing this. Well, yes, there are some global forces. Yes, the American dollar has

declined in value, and, yes, there may be some changes in the forest sector. None of that is new.

The American dollar rises and declines; you can almost put it on a graph. Because this is fundamentally an export industry, the paper sector, the pulp sector and the sawmilling sector know the graph. They can pretty well predict when the American dollar is going to ascend in value and when it's going to decline in value. The forest sector has been managing that issue for over 60 years. They don't consider that to be a fundamental problem. They actually have some coping mechanisms. They hedge against a declining or ascending value of the American dollar, and they can almost do it predictably.

For the McGuinty government to say this industry is changing—this industry has been changing since many of these mills were established 60, 70 or 80 years ago. If you look at some of these mills, they adjusted production, they sped up their machines, they put in new machines, they put in larger machines, they put in new pulping units. This industry has been changing for some time, and these mills, these communities and these workers have been among the most adaptable in the world in terms of meeting that change.

So when the McGuinty government says it's global forces—what nonsense. This industry has been adjusting to and dealing with and addressing global forces successfully since before most of the members of the Liberal cabinet appeared in this province. This has been a very successful bedrock industry. It is fundamental to the Ontario economy, fundamental to the northern economy and fundamental overall to the success of the Ontario economy.

But two things have happened in the last few years that literally strike at the heart of this industry. The biggest thing that has happened to them is that we now have a government that goes around the province and says that it's a good thing to drive up electricity rates. It even says that it's a good thing that we should sign a deal with Bruce Power for electricity that at base will be 6.43 cents a kilowatt hour and then we are going to subsidize them if they have construction overruns, and we're going to subsidize them if the price of uranium goes up, and we're going to subsidize them for inflation, and we're going to give them a reduction in their lease costs, all of which is going to drive up the hydro bill. But the McGuinty government says that's a good thing.

Part of this government's stated policy is to drive electricity rates through the roof. But that has repercussions, real repercussions. This is an industry—not unlike the steel industry, not unlike the mining industry, not unlike the chemical industry—in which the cost of electricity is really important. The cost of electricity will determine, in many cases, whether a mill or a production facility continues to succeed. This is an industry in which the cost of electricity can, in some cases, be 30% or 40% of your cost of production. So, literally, you have situations where if the price of electricity, the electricity rate, goes up by, say, 10%, that may be an annoyance in some places—it might be an annoyance for me in my hydro

bill; it might be an annoyance at an auto assembly plant—but the electricity rate going up by 10% or 15% will put a lot of these mills out of business.

That is what has been happening. The deliberate, intentional policy of the McGuinty government to drive electricity rates through the roof is literally putting mill after mill after mill out of business—thousands of jobs, community economies devastated, regional economies devastated.

What really rubs salt in the wound, though, for people in northern Ontario is that in almost every case where you've got a paper mill, a pulp mill, a sawmill, within 10 kilometres, 20 kilometres, 30 kilometres, there's a power dam. What are the reasons that these mills were established where they are? Well, there are two reasons: one, the best wood fibre in the world, and the second reason, the potential to produce hydroelectricity at a very affordable rate. That's why they were built where they were built.

1540

To this day, if you go to the mill in Kenora—which will shut down tomorrow if something isn't done—that mill is surrounded by no fewer than five power dams, some of them 20 kilometres away, some 40 kilometres away, some 50 kilometres away, all of which produce electricity for under \$20 a megawatt, yet as a result of McGuinty government policy, that mill and those workers have to pay \$80 a megawatt for that electricity. They say to themselves, "This doesn't make sense. We've got electricity right here, close to our mill, we've got transmission lines that will bring it here, and we know the electricity costs only \$20 a megawatt to produce, yet because of the McGuinty government policy, we have to pay \$80 for that electricity." Meanwhile, mills in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota might be paying \$40 or \$45 a megawatt for electricity, and mills in Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia are paying about \$35 a megawatt.

Here's the scenario for a paper mill in Ontario, and I can actually give you the price because Manitoba Hydro does surveys on this. On average, the monthly hydro bill for a paper mill in Ontario is about \$2.2 million a month now, under the McGuinty government. The same mill, if it's located in Quebec, would pay \$1.2 million a month; \$1 million less a month. In British Columbia, it would only pay \$1 million a month; \$1.2 million a month less than Ontario. In Manitoba, they pay a little over \$900,000 a month.

It's clear what's happening. The McGuinty government electricity policy, the policy of driving electricity rates through the roof, is literally making Ontario mills uncompetitive. This is not global forces; this is McGuinty government forces. This is the McGuinty government literally saying, "Here's the electricity policy, drive the price through the roof, and too bad, so sad, if dozens of communities across northern Ontario lose their economy and thousands of workers are put out of work."

Now, the other thing that's happening is every once in a while you'll hear the Premier or the Minister of Natural

Resources say that these mills are outdated. Ontario mills are not outdated. The mill in Dryden has one of the most recent paper machines that you'd find in North America; one of the biggest, one of the fastest. Not only that, it's just had \$400 million of new investment in the pulping process. The mill at my hometown, if you look at it over the last 10 years, has probably had half a billion dollars of new investment.

Other mills: A brand new sawmill in Ear Falls, a state-of-the-art sawmill, a high-technology sawmill, and under the McGuinty government electricity policy, they can't make money. Weyerhaeuser completed an oriented strand board, truss board mill, just outside of Kenora, state-of-the-art, some of the newest technology in the world; because of the McGuinty government electricity policy, they can't make money—exactly the kind of mill that you hear the McGuinty government promote and say is what we need to do. But I'll tell you something. If they have to pay \$80 a megawatt for their electricity, while competing mills elsewhere in North America are paying half that or a third that, they can be as modern, they can be as high-tech, they can be as razzle-dazzle as you want them to be, and they won't be able to make money.

Now, the McGuinty government has tried to finesse this issue. We hear the McGuinty government boast that they have made \$680 million available for the forest sector. They're throwing all this money. The forest sector doesn't want money thrown at it. They're not interested. This is a problem that cannot be solved by throwing money at it. What they are saying is, "Look, we've got two fundamental problems here. You've driven the price of electricity so high, and you continue to drive the price of electricity so high, that even if you gave us all this money, it would be gone within two years to pay for the electricity."

So all the announcements of the McGuinty government—"Oh, we're going to give you loan guarantees," and "Oh, we're going to give you a grant"—the industry simply looks at it and says, "Look, you missed the point." Actually, to be fair, the McGuinty government is deliberately missing the point. They know what the problem is. They know the first problem is that electricity rates are too high to be sustainable for this industry. Second, they know that the delivered cost of wood is too high to be sustainable for this industry. But they think they can somehow finesse those two fundamental issues by talking about, "Oh, we're prepared to throw \$680 million at you." All the money—\$680 million or \$60 million or \$200 million—is not going to make a difference if those two fundamental issues are not addressed, and so far there is a reluctance by the McGuinty government to address those fundamental issues.

Let me say very directly, if those issues are not addressed within three or four years, we'll be lucky if we have even a couple of paper mills, a couple of pulp mills, across northern Ontario. That is how severe this situation is. Companies are simply not prepared to invest in Ontario given the electricity policy and the wood fibre policies of this government. They will invest in Quebec,



and they are investing in Quebec. When Cascades announced they were shutting down a paper machine in Thunder Bay, they simply said, "We're moving the production to Quebec." When Abitibi has talked about shutting down the mill in Kenora, they are part and parcel of that, trying to move the production out of Ontario and either into Quebec or British Columbia. If Tembec, which has a newsprint mill in Kapuskasing and in Pine Falls, Manitoba, discontinues their investment in Kapuskasing and puts literally hundreds of people out of work, they'll be shifting production to their newsprint mill in Manitoba.

It's very clear what is happening here, and it's very clear that this game the McGuinty government is playing, "We'll announce this this week and we'll announce something else the next week" isn't addressing the fundamental problem.

The forest sector is not asking for money. They are not asking for subsidies. They're simply asking that they be allowed to pay the cost of producing electricity where they are located. If you can produce electricity 10 kilometres from the mill for \$20 a megawatt, they're quite willing to pay that. If you can produce electricity near the mill for \$30 a megawatt and transmit it to the mill, they're quite willing to pay that. But the McGuinty government policy of driving electricity rates through the roof and saying, "You must pay \$80 a megawatt for electricity that costs only \$20 a megawatt at a hydro dam near your mill," is unfair. That's driving this industry, these mills and these jobs out of the province.

The government situation for northwestern Ontario is even more absurd. Many people don't know this, but the electricity system west of Wawa is not even connected into the southern Ontario electricity grid. It's for that reason that when southern Ontario was hit by a blackout in the summer of 2003, the lights stayed on west of Wawa. It's a totally separate electricity system. And it's an electricity system that is dominated by power dams, by falling water electricity. It's an electricity system where, literally, you still have untapped rivers that can produce more electricity. It's an electricity system that actually has a surplus. Northwestern Ontario doesn't even use all the electricity that is available there, but they're forced, as a result of McGuinty government policy, to pay \$80 a megawatt for electricity that is produced in their own backyard for less than \$20 a megawatt.

1550

Let me tell you what's happening there, because that's where a majority of the job losses have come. That's where we're talking over 2,000 jobs lost in just the last year or so. The McGuinty government electricity policy could force the closure of the mill in Kenora, which is on the cusp now. It has put the mill in Dryden in danger. It has put the Bowater mill, the biggest mill in Thunder Bay, in danger. Abitibi is trying to sell their mill in Thunder Bay. Cascades is threatening to shut down their mill in Thunder Bay. Norampac is threatening to shut down their mill in Red Rock after laying off 175 people.

The mill in Marathon is touch and go. The mill in Terrace Bay, one of the pulp mills there, just closed down—150 jobs.

The McGuinty government, through its unfair and bizarre electricity policy, could close every one of those mills, and let me say that the McGuinty government is well along in this process—well along in this process—of closing every one of those mills and resulting in the loss of tens of thousands of jobs. Do you know what? That would result in a huge electricity surplus. But do you know what else? That electricity would just sit there, unused. It couldn't be transmitted to southern Ontario; it couldn't be transmitted to Minnesota; it couldn't be transmitted to Manitoba.

Somebody who came to Ontario from outside the province would look at this and say, "Well, this is crazy. Why would a provincial government follow an electricity policy that is resulting in the loss of tens of thousands of jobs, that is devastating local economies and regional economies?" Frankly, there's no upside. It's not as if you could take that electricity supply and move it to Toronto; you can't. It's not as if you could sell it into the United States and make money from it there; you can't. It's not as if you could sell it into Manitoba and make money off it there; you can't. Literally tens of thousands of jobs and dozens of communities are being shut down by a McGuinty government policy that has no rhyme or reason to it—none. Why would any government literally shut down a whole economic region as a result of government policy when there is no upside?

From time to time I hear some of the government staffers say things like, "Oh, this is a sunset industry." If this were a sunset industry, we wouldn't see the province of Manitoba actually putting out a request for proposals for another mill in Manitoba and companies going to Manitoba to put in proposals to build a mill. We wouldn't see, for example, a plan coming forward now in British Columbia to reopen a pulp mill that has been idle for over two years. But that is what's happening: A pulp mill is about to be reopened, one that's been idle for the last couple of years.

We wouldn't see companies like Abitibi, Tembec or Domtar planning to put literally hundreds of millions of dollars of new investment into their mills in that province, but that's what's happening. We wouldn't see, for example, Grant Forest Products going down to the Carolinas to invest in two mills there. So when the McGuinty government says, "Oh, this is a sunset industry," the only thing that is "sunset" is the thinking of the McGuinty government.

This is not a sunset industry. In fact, if we contemplate for a minute, we now have the largest middle class in the world not in the United States, not in Europe but in the developing country of China. We all know what middle-class people do. They buy books. They buy newspapers. They buy magazines. They read a lot. In other words, the largest middle class the world has ever known is about to start buying more paper, is about to insist on reading books, magazines and newspapers. Second, we have the

developing economy of India, which now has the second-largest middle class in the world, people who are about to start buying newspapers, books and magazines. So this is not a sunset industry. What it is is a government that doesn't want to recognize the irrationality, the wrong-headedness and the destructiveness of its own policy. That's what we have here. I could also talk about the delivered cost of wood, but I'm going to forgo that because I know other members of our caucus will want to engage in this debate. But I say to the McGuinty government, you can talk about throwing money at this, and you can even engage in your favourite game, when you run out of all other excuses, of blaming the federal Liberals. How absurd. Provincial Liberals go out and campaign at election time for federal Liberals, and then when they run out of excuses for their own misbehaviour here in Ontario, they turn around and blame federal Liberals for their problems.

You can ask the federal Martin government to contribute some money—I think they should—but that's not going to make a difference unless and until you address the two fundamental mistakes of your own McGuinty government policies: You've driven electricity prices sky-high in a part of the province where electricity is very inexpensive to produce, and you continue to drive the delivered cost of wood sky-high in a part of the province where this is important.

So I call upon the McGuinty government to stop the photo ops, stop the phony press releases, and actually get down to dealing with the two fundamental problems: the fact that you've driven electricity rates through the roof, and the fact that you continue to drive the cost of delivered wood fibre through the roof as well.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. David Ramsay (Minister of Natural Resources, minister responsible for aboriginal affairs):** I will agree with the leader of the third party that it is good we're having this debate today, because this is a very important issue facing the province of Ontario, and rightfully, as he says, the whole province. This isn't a northern issue, and I must commend the Northern Ontario Municipal Association for bringing that message down to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario annual general meeting in August, to Toronto, where basically all the municipalities in Ontario really, I think for the first time, understood the importance of the forestry industry to their communities. There are hundreds of forestry jobs in Mississauga, hundreds of forestry jobs in Toronto, for example, as there are in communities in eastern Ontario and, of course, in northern Ontario. So this is a very important industry to the province.

It is sad, though, that the level of the debate is so simplified that the member of the third party is reducing it to an issue solely, it seems, of electricity rates and delivered wood costs. He knows it's a more complicated issue than that. There is a crisis in the forest sector and there's no denying that. That's why over a year ago now, I invited the participants in the industry—the companies,

the union reps, the municipal reps, some First Nations representatives and some technical experts in the industry—to come together and, in the competitive council report the member cited, to agree on what the challenges are facing the industry, and to advise government as to how we could participate in the changes that are needed.

I think that's where we part company with the member, in that we have to get our head out of the sand and realize that the industry is not going to look the same as it did five or 10 years ago.

I think in the end, as we transform this industry—it's transforming because of all the pressures, and we're going to talk about them, two of which the member has discussed—it is going to look different. I think in the end we will probably get the same number of jobs in our forest sector and maybe, eventually, even some more, but I think there are going to be some different jobs and they may be in different places across northern Ontario. That's what we have to work with. I think all of us have to be nimble and adaptable to these changes, to work together in partnership—the unions, the companies, with government—and to take a look at what that industry is going to look like.

When I look out ahead, what I see, whether you like this or not, is fewer but probably larger sawmills. That's the trend of the industry so that they can run efficient operations, and we have to remember that we shouldn't even call sawmills in Ontario mega mills, because our largest mill is still a third of the size of the large mills in the interior of British Columbia. So we really don't have large mills when it comes to the world-class scale, and there are lots of reasons to do with the nature of our wood compared to the British Columbia wood. We will have fewer sawmills. They will be larger. They'll be regional in nature rather than in every community like they used to be. They'll be running at three shifts a day. That's what sawmilling will look like.

**1600**

As we've seen from the transformation in the paper industry, there will be fewer paper machines producing less paper, because there is a reduced demand for both newsprint in North America and, as we've seen from some recent announcements in other provinces in this country, there is a reduced demand for a lot of office paper now that computerization is replacing it. So it is complicated, and the only way we're going to fix it is by working together.

Why is it that we have companies in other jurisdictions also closing, jurisdictions that you could cite as having very low electricity costs on the one hand, and jurisdictions that have very low delivered wood costs on the other? Let's take the current example—because it's the same company that does business in Kenora—Abitibi. They just decided to close their paper operation in Newfoundland. Compared to Ontario, Newfoundland has relatively low electricity costs, and yet they closed that plant. So you can't say it's just electricity prices that are causing these companies to reduce their operations.



At the end of his speech, the member brings up the delivered wood cost. That is a significant factor in the operation of our mills today in Ontario. In my council's report, they refer to Saskatchewan as having one of the lowest delivered wood costs in the country. It's as low as \$35 a cubic metre, compared to the Ontario average—which is high—of \$55. Yet, two weeks ago, when the resource ministers were in Saskatchewan, Weyerhaeuser announced the closing of their paper mill in Prince Albert—over 600 jobs. What is the reason for that? Why have they done that? I have to ask the member, what's going on here? There is obviously a transformation going on here—

**Mr. Hampton:** Mark my words: In three months, you'll be eating those words.

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:**—and the only way we're going to look at this is that we've got to work together.

**The Acting Speaker:** Leader of the third party, can you allow the debate to continue?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** It's very hard to take, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** But I'm sure you want to hear it inside the chamber.

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm only citing these examples because that's the reality of the day. I would hope and pray that something does happen in Prince Albert within the next few months so that those displaced workers in Saskatchewan get their employment back and survive the blow that that community has had. I don't want to see any of this happen in any jurisdiction in this country, but the reality is that it is happening, so what we have to do is work with the community.

I have a very good working relationship, for instance, with the mayor of Kenora, Dave Canfield. We have spoken about what the future would look like in Kenora. What we're going to see with this transition is one machine rather than two paper machines. We're going to see an increase in sawmilling jobs. I've committed to the mayor that we are going to work with him and the proponents who are coming forward for other value-added operations in the Kenora area. He is in discussions with a company that has got a very exciting modern idea called House-in-a-Box. The timing couldn't be better, with the destruction that the hurricanes have caused in the Gulf States of the United States and the need for such a portable type of modular housing operation.

With computerization today, you can basically order a house from any jurisdiction in North America. The building code goes in for that particular state—say it's Nebraska—and that house can be produced in Kenora, put in a box and shipped to Nebraska, exactly up to code for that jurisdiction. That is the new type of thinking that we have to start to employ in this industry, and so it is going to look different. It's not just going to be lumber and paper. It has moved on, as it has in the last few years now, into things like oriented strand board and particle board. Some of it is not competitive with China, but

some of the more medium-density board is, so we need to add value to that. The thing is, what we have to do is to work together. That's what we have to do.

What the council said to government is, "Because of the tough problems that we have here, it is tough for us to raise capital." People don't want to invest in this industry right now. But I would have to address right now what the member said. Nobody on this side of the House, nobody in the McGuinty government has ever said, "This is a sunset industry." I don't know where you're getting that from. I surely hope that's not what you believe in, because forestry has a great future in this province, and it's going to do that.

We responded to the council's report to say, OK, one of the biggest challenges the industry has now in making these changes, these transformations, is access to capital. We will basically guarantee a pool of capital up to \$350 million so that they can get loan guarantees for up to 50% of the project costs, to go ahead with many of the investments they need. But in talking with the industry, we understood that isn't enough, so we came up with our forest prosperity fund, which at the moment has \$150 million basically in grant money, very much like the auto sector fund that the industry compared this to, and the needs to, to lever these investments, to make these improvements. This is what the companies need. This is the type of operation we've done, the program we've brought in place.

There are also ongoing costs that obviously the report has identified. Interestingly enough, and very ironic, is that the last two governments had created these costs by downloading these expenditures to the companies.

I'd like to read a letter that was signed by the Honourable Bud Wildman when he was Minister of Natural Resources—this is dated 1991—responding to, at that time, the E.B. Eddy company in Espanola. The company was very concerned about the changing of the contribution the government was making to forest access roads. Minister Wildman said, "I appreciate the implications of eliminating forest management agreement road funding. However, the ministry has determined that funding for forest renewal is our highest priority." Therefore, the decision was made back then to download the cost, both construction and maintenance.

The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines had a development road program called the NORT program, which was very small. It basically supplied money for new development roads to mines, and some new roads for other activities in northern Ontario. But the main funding for those roads declined. That had happened at that time. Then the previous government downloaded the cost of the forest inventory. This is a big concern. This is a concern of the unions and companies in northwestern Ontario, that they no longer have a handle on what's out there in the forest. That is a serious problem and a serious concern.

When that responsibility was downloaded to companies, the companies did not have the resources to carry out modern, sophisticated forest inventory work to give

some certainty as to what and where the wood is, but also to help in the planning of how you would access that wood. We're going to adopt the most modern technology agreed upon by industry to make sure that we bring the forest inventory for Ontario up to speed, so that the companies have world-class mapping of the resources and are going to be able to plan exactly how they access that wood, and know where their water crossings are so they can plan for that and not have to send people out on the ground.

Also with this technology, in some of the demonstrations I've seen, this new technology is able to identify wood that the old stereoscopic aerial photography was no longer able to see. I've seen in some demonstration patches that all of a sudden 26% of the wood we see now is in cedar. That just wasn't available before because you couldn't see it. We're going to get a better handle on what's out there in the bush. That's going to help with the delivered wood cost, in the planning.

These are some of the aspects we're doing with our program. I would say to the member that I would hope he would work with us in making sure we all work together to make sure this transition is beneficial to the people of Ontario. What I want to say is that maybe the member needs to go out, as I have done recently again, and talk to the companies and really find out what their needs are.

I'm going to give you an example. I spoke to one of the major companies that operates in this province the other day. This person is about to take over the running of the operation and wanted to go back in the company's history, in the last 24 months, and try to find out what were the increased costs that were affecting the bottom line of the company. My guess was—because this is a company that has sawmills and has pulp and paper—that maybe it was natural gas. The person said, "No, that's not what it is. When we went back over the last two years, it was actually petroleum products that was the highest factor." In fact, what this person said to me was that in the last 24 months their total petroleum product bill, which is not only the fuels but many of the chemicals that are derived from petroleum, exceeded the total of natural gas and electricity costs. So it is not—

**Mr. Hampton:** David, you go try and peddle that.

1610

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** That's just the facts. I suggest to the member, maybe you need to sit down with the company officials and really understand how complex a challenge this is. If it was as simple as just changing one policy here, it could be done, but it's not that simple. It is very complex and it requires working with the companies to make sure we do this. That's why we're here.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Mr. Ramsay:** Mr. Speaker, I wish the member were more interested in hearing what I think are some of the solutions to this. He likes to talk when it's not even his turn. I guess that's what's going on.

The member has to understand that the industry isn't going to look the same. He's stuck in the status quo. He thinks that everything is just going to be the same. I look

at other industries. I look at how the CAW has worked in the automobile industry and has understood how that industry has had to change over the last few years. Quite frankly, this industry hasn't changed all that much over the last 20 years. Because of the cyclical nature of the resource industry, when the good times have been there, they were usually very good, and it derived enough revenue and cash to withstand the troughs when they were down in the bottom. But we're no longer in that cycle, and I think that's what we have to understand here, that this is a major transition, and to get through that transition we're all going to have to roll up our sleeves and work together. Our contribution is to help incent some of those investments that will make that industry competitive, and that's what we have to do.

I would say to the whip, wherever the whip is, that he needs to let me know how much time I have left. I know we have other northern members who want to speak and I never made a count of the time.

Mr. Speaker, this might be an appropriate time to let you know that I will be sharing my time with the members for Nipissing, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay—Superior North in the next few minutes.

It is good to have this discussion. We need to have the discussion.

I would say that today in Kenora the five other unions have returned to the table in those discussions with the company. I think that's good news. I would hope that all the unions will be back at the table so that we can resolve the situation in Kenora, to make sure that Kenora is a sustainable community, as it should be, and that we can all work together in finding, which I know we can, more resource industry jobs for that town and then we can start to make it grow. But first we have to stabilize the primary industry, make sure we've got a strong, sustainable paper machine running there, a larger sawmill, with 50 more jobs in that community, and then start working on these value-added businesses that are eager to share in that wood basket in the Kenora area. I think Kenora can be a very strong, resource-based industry for years to come.

**Mr. Norm Miller (Parry Sound—Muskoka):** It's my pleasure to join in the debate this afternoon on the opposition day motion put forward by the third party.

**Mr. Bisson:** You'll be voting with us, right?

**Mr. Miller:** I'll just reflect on that for a moment.

"That, in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty government must recognize that during the first two years of its mandate, thousands of jobs have been lost in the forest industries of northern Ontario;"—no argument there.

"Recognize that communities are being devastated by the loss of jobs and the disintegration of local and regional economies;"—certainly that is true.

"Recognize that as a result of the government's hydro-electricity policies, sawmills and pulp and paper mills in northern Ontario are forced to pay \$80 a megawatt or more for electricity"—and it goes on talking about



electricity costs. I think it is self-evident that the forestry sector in Ontario is in crisis.

Last spring, as the northern development and mines critic I had the pleasure of doing a seven-day trip around northern Ontario. I drove 3,700 kilometres. The thing that struck me more than anything else on that road trip, as you go from community to community, was how in just about every northern community the mill is the feature. In many cases, it's the sole industry in the community. There's no one industry that has a more significant impact on the north and on specific communities and people than the forestry sector. Maybe it's just a coincidence that the crisis has been brewing over the last two years, when we've seen some of the significant cost factors in the forestry sector go up dramatically just in the time period that the current government has been in power.

I'd like to emphasize the crisis. I was talking to a mill manager, and he listed some of the different mills that are in trouble.

Of course, this week we've had the members of the United Steelworkers union from Kenora's Abitibi Consolidated mill, as their one paper machine is scheduled to shut down next week, October 23, I believe it is, of the two machines that are there. That's 355 jobs.

Norampac: When I was on my trip around northern Ontario last April, I stopped in Red Rock and I met with people from the mill there. At that point, they were talking about how concerned they were about electricity prices. Now I see that one machine is being shut down, 175 jobs being lost in Red Rock. And that mill is the only business in town, really, for all the people who live there.

In Terrace Bay, Neenah Paper shut a line down earlier; Opasatika; Chapleau; Bowater in Thunder Bay, one machine shut down; Cascades paper in Thunder Bay, a machine shut down; Tembec, a newspaper machine shut down, 65 jobs. The pulp mills in Marathon and Smooth Rock Falls are really just hanging on the edge. So there's no doubt there is a crisis.

After meeting with Glen Morrison, the president of United Steelworkers, 1330, Abitibi Consolidated, I asked the Premier in question period on Monday about this crisis and his response was, and I've got it right here, "The forestry sector is experiencing unprecedented challenges as a result of globalization of the industry. That globalization is leading to consolidations and it's leading to job losses...." Those were the words of the Premier on Monday of this week. Well, that's true to a certain extent, but you can't ignore the fundamentals of the industry. The fact of the matter is, we have the highest delivered wood costs in the world. What I've heard is US\$55 per cubic metre. I was speaking to a mill manager and he itemized that. Delivered wood costs are basically all the costs of getting the fibre to the mill. It counts reforestation, it counts planting, it counts road-building. If that cost is the highest in the world, it's pretty hard for your industry to be competitive.

Of course, we have just about the highest electricity prices in North America, particularly for pulp and paper mills. It's about a third of their costs. When I was in Red

Rock, they said that in their case roughly about a third of the cost at their containerboard mill was electricity. So electricity is a huge factor, particularly in these northern pulp and paper mills.

I was talking to a mill manager in northeastern Ontario who illustrated this situation. This was just when the minister was about to do his second response to his Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness. He said to me that if his particular mill, which used on average about 100 megawatts of electricity, was located in Manitoba, based on September prices, where he paid about \$70 per megawatt hour compared to \$30 per megawatt hour in Manitoba, he'd save \$30 million a year. That's one mill—\$30 million a year. In the case of that mill, that's the difference between being viable and not being viable.

There's no doubt that there's a crisis. Forestry is a huge industry for northern Ontario and for the whole province. It's \$19 billion in sales, \$4.8 billion in salaries and benefits for direct employees—and they're good jobs. The average wage for direct employees is \$68,000 a year. When you add up the indirect employees, there are 275,000 people employed—billions annually in federal, provincial and municipal taxes. It's \$240 million a year just in stumpage fees.

The minister has had an expert council go out and look at the challenges of the forestry sector—this is the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness—and he's come back and responded to that. His first response was in June, and in that response he basically brought some loan guarantees forward. I happened to be up in Thunder Bay and I toured the Bowater plant at that point, which has since shut down one of their paper machines. The response of the manager of the Bowater plant to the minister's first response of loan guarantees was, "We can get access to capital in our case and there is no point in investing in our business if you're not going to make money, if the fundamentals aren't there." Why would you invest in it? The government has to address those fundamental costs.

## 1620

The minister responded in June basically with loan guarantees, and then recently he had a second response which was \$150 million over three years, and he also had a section about maintaining primary access roads up to \$28 million a year, and \$10 million toward making the inventory more accurate. To give you some perspective, first of all, the minister's council, which he put together, was made up of many experts. It was made up of municipal representatives like David Canfield, the mayor of the city of Kenora, but also the president—I assume he is the president, Frank Dottori, of Tembec Industries, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, many industry representatives, Cecil Makowski of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union. They did a lot of work on this report, and they came up with 26 recommendations. The \$28 million toward primary road maintenance falls far short of what they asked for. They asked for

all the costs on primary roads to be covered, and 50% of the costs on secondary roads.

All that the minister has so far proposed will reduce the delivered wood costs, which are the highest in the world, by US\$1 per cubic metre. That is certainly not a very substantial step. In fact, Cecil Makowski, who sat on that committee, on that council, called the response "pathetically anemic." Those were his words. The Ontario Forest Industries Association stated that the minister's recent response "failed to address core issues," and there was nothing to address energy costs. I know our energy critic will have something to say about energy.

Certainly in northwestern Ontario they have a unique situation where the connections to southern Ontario are small. When I was at the Bowater plant, they were watching the price of electricity across the province. When people turned their air conditioners on in Toronto and the price was high, they shut down the line in Thunder Bay, even though when they do that, that means either the coal-fired plant at Atikokan or Thunder Bay shuts down or they spill water around one of the hydro plants because they can't get the electricity down to southern Ontario anyway. It seems like a bit of a silly situation and I think maybe the government should look at some creative solutions to try to deliver the real price of electricity for people in northern Ontario.

The province's response has not really addressed—it's a baby step. The Timmins council is very concerned about this issue. In fact, they passed a resolution and I'd like to read that into the record: "That council for the corporation of the city of Timmins does hereby request the province of Ontario to immediately provide funding to address the four key recommendations contained in the Minister of Natural Resources Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness report as follows:

"The government—

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh (Halton):** You're almost finished.

**Mr. Miller:** Thank you for letting me know that I'm almost at the end of my time. I appreciate that, whip of the day. I'm going to have to wrap up here. I've been instructed by the whip of the day.

I'd just like to get a couple of more things on the record. The city of Timmins is asking the government to provide 100% of the construction and maintenance of primary roads, 50% of the cost of secondary roads, and four other points that I think make a lot of sense.

I'm receiving letters from Tembec employees in my riding. I've received about 50 from the hardwood floor plant at Huntsville. They're all concerned for their jobs. They are asking for some of the recommendations of the minister's council report to be implemented. I have many different forestry businesses in my riding that are concerned about this, but it affects the whole province, it's such a significant business.

I'm going to leave time for other members of my party who I know would also like to contribute to this debate.

**Ms. Monique M. Smith (Nipissing):** I am pleased today to speak to this resolution and to speak about the

forestry industry, as it is such an important component of my riding. As many members of the House will know, a great many of my constituents work at Tembec in Timiskaming, as well as the Tembec site in Mattawa and, of course, Columbia Forest Products in Rutherglen, as well as some subsidiary industries related to the forest industry.

Today, again, we had some troubling news in our local media about 63 workers being laid off at Columbia Forest Products. Our area is definitely not going untouched by the troubles in the forest industry, and it is, therefore, very much top of mind for me and for many of my constituents.

I have spoken on numerous occasions with representatives of Tembec about their specific issues. I know that with respect to Columbia Forest Products, they are citing the weakening hardwood veneer and plywood markets and being squeezed by the offshore markets over the last two to three years as being incredibly important to the reasons that they've had some layoffs. As well, they cite the strong Canadian dollar as contributing to tough business conditions—again, referring to a number of the essential components of the perfect storm, as the minister has referred to it in the past.

I had the opportunity to meet with a representative of Tembec. Just a few weeks ago, I actually visited their mill in Timiskaming, which is such a major employer for many in my region. At that time, I met with the mayor of Timiskaming, the provincial member of the Legislature, municipal representatives from the city of North Bay, as well as representatives of Tembec, Charlie Gagnon, one of their vice-presidents and president Frank Dottori. It was an incredibly useful and insightful meeting for me. It was helpful to see exactly the magnitude of the operations that Tembec has in Timiskaming and the impact that it has on our local economy in both North Bay and northeastern Ontario.

Subsequent to that meeting, I was happy to be able to host a meeting between the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and the vice-president of Tembec, Charlie Gagnon, who set out for the minister the concerns that the forestry industry has and specifically addressed some of the issues with respect to the federal government and its role in this situation.

Certainly everyone recognizes that the forestry industry is in a time of transition. Subsequent to my meetings and visits at Tembec, I have received a number of calls and correspondence from representatives of Tembec who want me to assist them in pushing the federal government to assist the industry. They recognize that the package that the Minister of Natural Resources has outlined is going some way to assist them in this time of difficulty. They recognize that it is a good first step and that we are continuing to work with them, but they see a primary role at this point in time for the federal government.

As you know, the McGuinty government is moving to enhance the competitiveness of the forestry sector and to contribute to the strong and prosperous communities in northern Ontario who rely on that sector. We have



committed more than \$330 million in new initiatives over the next five years in addition to what we had announced as \$350 million in loan guarantees. I know that the minister outlined for us some of the various components of those initiatives, which are significant.

At this point, however, the representatives of Tembec have outlined for me that they feel that the federal government has to come to the plate. Canada has won the NAFTA ECC ruling. As one of the representatives of Tembec outlined for me, that is the last appeal available in the process. By not complying with this ruling, the US is not only in violation of its agreement with Canada; it is also in violation of its own laws. To put it very specifically, Tembec currently has \$300 million on deposit with the United States in duties. The softwood lumber industry is now in a position where it is defending Canada's rights in NAFTA. Where so many other industries are affected by NAFTA rulings, the softwood lumber industry right now is at the forefront in defending our rights and ensuring that the United States adheres to the rulings of NAFTA.

What the softwood lumber industry is seeking from the federal government is assistance to the industry in the form of loan guarantees from Export Development Canada. They will recognize the duty deposits as accounts receivable. They could recognize those duty deposits that are sitting with the US—in the case of Tembec, \$300 million—as accounts receivable and provide loan guarantees to companies that wish to use them. Since the industry is confident that they will be getting those deposits back, the government has virtually no risk. It is for that reason that they are seeking this assistance from the federal government.

**1630**

The federal government has the ability, through Export Development Canada mechanisms, to provide this assistance to the industry in this time of need. It is the feeling of representatives from Tembec and the entire forestry industry that it is time for the federal government to come to the plate and provide them with this assistance, which is so readily available, as well as to continue with the battle that they have started to fight with the American government to ensure that this softwood lumber dispute is finally put to rest.

As you know, the forestry industry has been fighting this battle for some time. They have put gigantic resources into this battle and have won at every step of the way. They feel it's time for the federal government to step up to the plate and continue that fight at the international level, as well as to provide them with some support through these EDC loan guarantees that would allow them to whether this "perfect storm," as we've described it, and assist them through this difficult period of time.

We, as a government, have provided them with assistance. I have spoken with the representatives of Tembec and of various other forestry sector representatives in my riding. They know we are working toward solutions; they know we are committed to seeing those solutions. These

industries are so incredibly important to our various northern communities. I'm pleased today to stand up with the other representatives of the northern communities in my caucus and talk about all of the work we are doing to ensure their sustainability and their prosperity into the future, and to ensure that we have those good, sound, well-paying jobs in the north for all of our residents of northern Ontario.

I know that I'm sharing the time with other members of our northern caucus, so I will leave it at that, only to say that I hope the federal government is listening to us today and will assist our forestry industry in any way they can in this battle they have.

**Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** It's a pleasure to join in on the discussion this afternoon on the opposition day motion of the third party with regard to the forest industry in northern Ontario. I would certainly like to make a few comments with regard to this issue. There is no question that the industry in northern Ontario is in a crisis: The leader of the third party recognizes that; all of our visitors in the gallery today recognize that; we recognize that; the people who live in northern Ontario recognize that; the people who write in the business sections of newspapers recognize that. It seems that the government of this province fails to recognize that.

Yes, they brought in a program, they say, to support forestry in the north, but again, it's just more of that Liberal spin and it's not going to do a heck of a lot. I ask myself, what good are matching funds to someone who simply cannot afford to operate under the current circumstances? They're not going to make an investment into their business if the climate that this government is responsible for creating simply isn't there.

**Mr. Bisson:** If you understand that, why don't they?

**Mr. Yakabuski:** Well, we're going to try to correct that in a couple of years.

Anyway, I support this motion and I recognize that it is extremely important. I had the opportunity to meet with members of the Steelworkers the other day, articulating to me the severity of this crisis and what it means to their mill, the Abitibi mill up in Kenora, 320 jobs that could be lost. I mean, the ramifications of that are huge to a community.

**Mr. Bisson:** Sunday.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** It's happening in the next couple of days, as the member for Timmins-James Bay just reminded me. That can have devastating effects on communities, so we're here to support it.

I also want to take this opportunity to speak about the forestry crisis in my own riding as well. Our mills—Murray's, McCrae's, Shaw's, Hokum's, Gulick's, Neuman's, Stein's—are all suffering from the same problems, not the same issues as the north, but the crisis in forestry is affecting us all. Logging contractors, such as Barry Verch with M.W. Miller, Lidtkes, Dombroskis, are all suffering because of the high cost of energy, and that's been brought on by the policies of this government.

There was a great story in the Eganville Leader a couple of weeks ago about Hokum's mill, Ben Hokum and his father, how they started the mill and how they have worked over some 50 years, bringing employment and, as much as we can expect or try to develop in areas such as ours that are constantly being harmed by this government's policies, some form of employment and prosperity to the people who live in my riding. What I found interesting about it—I didn't find it remarkable, because I'm not surprised—is the forward thinking, the determination, and the will to succeed in spite of the fact that there were tremendous obstacles that Ben Hokum and his father faced, and he faces today, along with his grandson, Dean Felhaber, who runs the operation alongside Ben Hokum. It was a wonderful story about people who—even though the cards can be stacked against them sometimes, and governments, through regulation and lack of support, make it very difficult for these companies to be successful—still forge on because this is their life, this is their livelihood, these are the people they care about, and they're going to do what they can to make it work. Those are the kind of people we have in my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

The leader of the third party talked about the power that is developed up in the north, the White Dog and the Caribou dams, places like that. That power, he's suggesting, should be used up in the north. I understand where he's coming from. In my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, on the majestic Ottawa River that borders my riding, we've got Des Joachims at 420-some megawatts. We've got Chenaux at 144 megawatts. On the Ottawa River—what a place. I mean, here's a river that is one of the world's greatest rivers. You might not know this, but they called the town of Deep River that because the water outside of Deep River is 300-and-some feet deep in the Ottawa River. But if you go up around Deux Rivières, you'll find spots where the Ottawa River is over 700 feet deep. I mean, it's so deep that they brought the Loch Ness Monster over there, it went down in the Ottawa River and it drowned. It's never been seen since.

*Laughter.*

**Mr. Yakabuski:** No, no. That's a true story, I'm telling you. So it's a tremendous waterway.

Also in my riding, we've got the mighty Madawaska River, and on that river, we've got the Barrett Chute, the Mountain Chute, the Stuartville, the Calabogie and the Madawaska dams. A total of 1,200 megawatts of power are being produced in my riding, and what are we getting from it? What are our mills getting from it? High hydro bills on the part of this government, because we don't get to take the benefits of that. Because this is falling water power, we also don't get the high-paying jobs associated with it. This is not a big fossil fuel plant or a nuclear plant where there are tremendous numbers of people working at it. These are falling water plants producing 1,200 megawatts of power.

But what do we get out of this government? We get a fat "no" when it comes to sharing gas tax revenue in this province. I have reintroduced my private member's bill. I

hope those people on the other side of the House recognize that ridings like mine that supply the power to this province need a fair shake when it comes to sharing their gas tax that they're paying to your treasury.

As a matter of fact, folks, when you look at the per capita amount of gas tax being paid, we're the folks doling it out, the rural people. We can't jump on a bus. I asked the Premier in my column back in September, what time does the bus go through Quadeville, Dalton? Well, it doesn't. You've got to get into your vehicle and pay high gas prices and drive on our roads that we're not getting the support for so can we can refurbish those roads, rebuild them, make them better, because you're putting all the gas tax into urban Ontario. We need to have rapid transit, we need to have public transit, but we need our roads too.

**1640**

**Mr. Bisson:** In my riding, there are no roads.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** I hear you.

Another thing I want to talk about is, you're hearing some stories these days about these groups that want to shut down logging in Algonquin Park. Well, that is not going to happen. That can't happen. Anybody who wants to shut down logging in Algonquin Park is going to be in for the fight of their lives, ladies and gentlemen. I remember in the 1970s when my father was a member here and there was talk about shutting down logging in Algonquin Park. As he said then, "Over my dead body." There are thousands of people whose livelihood depends upon the multi-use concept of Algonquin Park in this province.

The Minister of Natural Resources is on record as saying, "Logging in Algonquin Park is safe," but that's a Liberal promise. I want to be very clear on that, ladies and gentlemen: That's a Liberal promise. I want to be on the record today as letting you know, Minister of Natural Resources, that logging has gone on in Algonquin Park since before this Legislature even existed. It will continue, because that is a vital part of the livelihood of people in my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

How am I doing for time, Laurie? OK?

**Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Victoria-Brock):** Keep going.

**Mr. Bisson:** You're on a roll. Go, John.

**Mr. Yakabuski:** OK.

Let's get back to the hydro costs of people operating forestry mills in Ontario. I talk to people in my riding. Dean Felhaber tells me what has happened to his hydro bills this year. These are people who are employing hard-working Ontarians. Oh, but the minister said today, "Those hard-working Ontarians—good news." Actually, she was going to show up in a Santa Claus suit but they had made it for the previous Minister of Energy, before the cabinet shuffle—well, we don't even have to go there. So the suit wasn't used as a prop today, but she came out there like Santa Claus, telling all these people in Ontario—an epiphany for the cabinet in Ontario—"Here we are, folks. We've decided that what we should do is give you back the money we took from you in the



first place. We're not going to pay you interest. We've kept it for all these months, for 16 months, but now we're going to give it back to you, just in time for Christmas. And maybe you could remember that it was a Liberal minister at a press conference who did the spin on it." It's quite remarkable that they could have a press conference to give back to somebody what was already theirs.

I want to reiterate the importance of forestry in Ontario, the importance of forestry to northern Ontario, because without forestry there ain't going to be much there.

I guess I could ask the minister, what's the plan with the generating station at Atikokan? I know I saw something in the paper about him saying, "Up there, did you know, I think what we should be doing is converting that to peat and biomass and keeping it going," because the Liberals' plan here is just to shut down Atikokan. But, you see, it's all part of their plan. How are you going to shut down Atikokan if the people up there need the power? Well, what you have to do ahead of time is make sure all the mills close. Then nobody needs the power and we can shut down the Atikokan plant.

I tell you, they're pretty sharp, but they're heartless when it comes to the people in this province. And that's what you should be asking yourself: Has this government forgotten about the people we are supposed to be serving? Have they forgotten about people? Those people who live up there, the people who live in my riding, can't just up and go wherever they want. They've lived there all their lives. These are their homes. Goodness gracious, let's face facts and admit that this government has turned its back on everybody in rural Ontario, in northern Ontario and all across this province.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East):** It's my pleasure to have an opportunity to join in the debate on opposition day. I do so from the perspective of a critic for economic development and trade. Although much of the debate so far has been about the forestry industry, and of course that's exactly what this motion is about, I think we all need to recognize that forestry is basically the first train in a major train wreck that's coming down the tracks in Ontario. It's actually the leading indicator of what the future has to hold if this government doesn't get a grip on its hydro policies and its energy policies in the province. It's basically the first line of defence, and it's being hit, and being hit hard, and the people are here today to tell you and the government that they support this motion that we're putting forward because somebody, gosh darn it, on your side of the House has to recognize that we have a crisis, that we have a significant problem. That problem is affecting these communities in a devastating way, and it's also going to be affecting the rest of the province very quickly. In fact, it already is.

I have to tell you that when you look at what the forestry industry means to the communities in the north, you'll hear a lot about that from the members who represent those areas. They're telling you exactly what it means to have a major employer shut its doors in their community, not because of anything that the employer

has done, not because of anything the workers have done, not because of any other factor, except that the government in this province is not prepared to deal with the crisis they're creating by doing nothing to make sure that the industry remains strong and viable.

But what is happening as a result? As a result, we are having an effect on local industries in southern Ontario as well. A lot of the supply industries that are supplying services to the forest industry are being affected. If those mills are closing, if that industry is no longer viable, then many corporations, many companies, in southern Ontario that supply to those industries are also going to be suffering, laying off, closing their doors and causing an economic downturn in the southern portions of this province. In fact, if there is a further closure of the 12 mills that are at risk right now in the province, 13,000 jobs will be lost in southern Ontario, 7,500 direct jobs are going to be lost in the north, and 17,500 indirect jobs lost in the north.

Furthermore, the financial impact on the lost business is going to be significant in the heart of Ontario's Golden Horseshoe. Records from just three forestry companies show that southern Ontario purchases of goods and services for their respective operations total well in excess of \$400 million a year. In Toronto alone, the loss of business will be well in excess of \$250 million annually.

The people around this side of the House across from us might be giggling and laughing at some of the comments that are being made today, but this is no laughing matter. This is an extremely serious matter. It's a serious matter for the north and a serious matter for southern Ontario as well. The cities of Burlington, Mississauga, Brampton, Ottawa all can be expecting significant financial and related job losses as a result of this government's inaction on the forestry file. The forestry industry has a significant impact on the rest of the province.

I could give you many more statistics, but I first want to quote to you some information. I was thinking about it, and there were warnings about this; the government had warnings about this not too long ago. One of those warnings came from an organization called AMPCO. You might know that organization. It's basically a collective of large power users in Ontario. Here's what they told the provincial government several months ago. In their report to the government on the government's hydro policies, they said:

"The industries that see the largest increase in costs are those that use relatively more electricity and purchase those products that use relatively more electricity for their production....

"The negative provincial economic impact will be exacerbated by the interlocking nature of business, affecting different sectors as costs are passed on between businesses, to the extent that they can be. Thus, for example, in addition to the automotive sector feeling the impact of higher energy costs directly, they could also feel the impact through higher prices for major suppliers in the primary metals sector.

"Further, reduced investment by other industries may also result in a reduction in activity in the construction

industry.... Finally, amongst the service industries, trade, accommodation, food, and education service (from a reduced population)"—all of these are going to be impacted.

"Clearly, the cost of electricity price impacts are pervasive. The impacts do not fall on any one customer group. They will be felt by all Ontarians."

This is not something that has been pulled out of the trees. This is in a report that was put together by well-established manufacturing companies in Ontario. Initially this organization, interestingly enough, came together in the 1970s over the energy crisis in the Golden Horseshoe, in the Niagara region. Now they're still up and running and are very concerned about this government's lack of action on the energy file and on hydro prices.

1650

I hope every single one of the members of this House is going to be supporting the forestry motion that's before us today, because if they don't, they are simply turning their backs not only on the forestry communities in the north, but also on their very own communities here in the south, for those members who don't represent a northern riding.

There is one last thing I wanted to say, and I think it reflects the sad situation here. When the energy policy came forward, one of the biggest criticisms of that very same organization of corporations that caught my eye was this: "The ICC is concerned about lack of informed dialogue on electricity issues. There is little evidence that stakeholders concerns are being recognized and acted upon. Nor does it appear that the full impacts of policy decisions are being communicated to the public."

I'm sure this public here would agree with that statement. I know every single person who's watching this debate today understands that this government has fallen down sorely and needs to get its act together when it comes to hydro policy.

**Mr. David Orazietti (Sault Ste. Marie):** I'm pleased to have the opportunity this evening to make some comments with respect to provincial forestry strategy and our government's efforts to reinvigorate the northern Ontario economy over the last number of years.

The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke brought up his father and his effort in trying to ensure that logging was maintained, for example, in Algonquin Park. I think it's worth going back a few years to the Peterson government, as an individual in northern Ontario who is in a community where we have in the neighbourhood of about 600 direct forestry jobs with the Flakeboard Co. Ltd., St. Marys Paper and Boniferro Mill Works, which is a small mill that's competing, as many of the mills in northern Ontario and northwestern Ontario are, to survive and profit and do well. As a northerner and as a relative newcomer to the Legislature, historically, if we look back at what took place in northern Ontario under the past two governments, I can't see much evidence of much support for my community of Sault Ste. Marie and other—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Orazietti:** I know this is going to hit a nerve or two because I guess this medicine is a bit difficult to swallow, but the reality is that for the NDP to come in here today and suggest that our government is not stepping up to the plate when it comes to the forestry industry with a strategy that's effective—I don't know. If the leader of the third party would expect us to implement a strategy like buying a Costa Rican rainforest or cancelling a hydro deal with Manitoba at a cost of \$150 million to taxpayers, that is not our idea of an effective strategy to support northern Ontario's forestry industry.

Your record in government was very clear when it came to the management of energy issues. No new power has been created for the past 13 years while the Conservatives and the NDP were in government. We have a huge hurdle to overcome as a province and as a government, as a number of communities in northern Ontario very well know, in addressing our energy needs for the province, for northern Ontario.

The Minister of Natural Resources, within the last week, was up in northern Ontario and broke ground on a new wind power generation plant that will produce 99 megs of electricity at a cost of about \$150 million as simply phase 1. Within the last couple of weeks, the Bruce nuclear contract was signed and we are going to be restarting Bruce nuclear to bring back additional power to the grid in Ontario.

I had the opportunity today to meet with a number of the union representatives from the Steelworkers union who are representing the Abitibi workers in Kenora. It was a pleasure to meet with them and discuss these issues. I certainly gave them the undertaking, as have all northern members and members of our government, that we're going to continue to work with them to do whatever we are able to protect those jobs in northern Ontario, to implement a strategy in northern Ontario that is effective for your livelihood and for the communities in northern Ontario.

As a northerner, nothing means more to me than protecting jobs in northern Ontario. There are many people and many members in our caucus here who certainly have other issues. The GTA members face different challenges here in Toronto. Obviously we all want a strong economy, but campaigning on jobs, job retention and youth out-migration is a major issue in northern Ontario and it's a very different dynamic than the members in the GTA face. But they obviously face equal and important challenges as well.

I just want to read an article that was in the Sault Star on September 30 with respect to the provincial forestry plan that the minister announced recently. It says:

"Don't include St. Marys Paper Ltd. and Boniferro Mill Works Inc. among the critics of the Ontario government's \$330-million, five-year aid package for the troubled forestry sector.

"While both Sault Ste. Marie manufacturers agree it was far from the industry's complete wish list, it did address immediate concerns.



"Some are criticizing it as too little, too late; we are just thankful a package has been announced," said Jim Boniferno, president of Boniferno Mill Works.

"We are a small player in the overall scheme of things and we view the opportunities available through the package as a timely lifeline.

"It doesn't address all our needs but it's a definite step in the right direction," said Marc Dube, external affairs spokesperson with St. Marys Paper.

"The important thing is that the government recognizes we are an industry in crisis.... They listened and came up with a package based on industry recommendations of what's needed to remain competitive."

I know there are other industries out there, like many of the paper mills in the province of Ontario, that are facing these challenges. The roughly 600 direct workers in the paper industry and the sawmilling industry in Sault Ste. Marie are doing their best to ensure they are competitive and they're meeting those challenges.

We've heard much talk about some of those factors that are coming together to play havoc in our forestry sector: the high dollar, the energy costs, foreign competition, efficiency issues and the delivering of wood supply costs. I think it's very apparent that electricity prices are only one factor that is impressing on the forestry sector this difficulty. It's evident from the fact that mills have closed in Quebec and British Columbia, where electricity costs are among the lowest in North America. It's one piece of the puzzle.

To the representatives here in the gallery, many of whom have come a great distance to be here to listen to this debate today, our government is doing as much as possible at this particular time to meet with you to discuss these issues and to offer a package to put money toward these initiatives.

The member from the third party says that money is not an issue, but we know it is. We know that providing the resources to pay for and support cogeneration, to upload the costs of building roads into the wood basket area where you get your fibre supply—those costs, as we know, were downloaded by the NDP in 1991 at an additional cost to the industry of about \$32 million. Those were paid for prior to 1991 and they were downloaded to the industry. That's something that, in our forestry incentive package, we're uploading, because we understand that we have to make things easier for you and we want to ensure that we help protect those particular jobs.

Even the member from Timmins-James Bay was making some of his remarks on electricity prices and said, "Yes, there are other issues out there. I'm not going to stand here today and say it's only electricity, because we know it's partly the American dollar being low; it's partly regulation," and other factors. It's in the Hansard of March 3, 2005.

The member from the third party who talks about energy rates, Mr. Hampton, said, "Industry energy price subsidization can be an attractive theory, but tricky in practice. I think it far better to work with the industry to

lower its energy costs through greater efficiency, not through a scheme of subsidized rates." That's Mr. Hampton, a member of the third party, in his book on public power.

The past several governments here in Ontario really abdicated their responsibilities when it came to providing adequate energy supply in the province of Ontario. The NDP raised hydro rates by 40% when they were in government, while they built no new supply in the province of Ontario. They paid \$150 million to cancel a lifeline from Manitoba and cancelled Ontario Hydro conservation initiatives that would have added up to 5,200 megawatts by 2000. It's very clear that this is a long history of ignoring the challenges the forestry sector faces.

#### 1700

We're not simply going to ignore the issue. We're not going to run from the challenge in the forestry sector in northern Ontario. We're not going to buy a rainforest in another country or cancel hydro deals. We're bringing back into Ontario new hydro supply. We are taking those steps because we know it's the right thing to do and we know the needs of the forestry industry here in the province of Ontario.

I also want to just go over some of those initiatives because they're very important, this \$330 million in new initiatives over the next five years. We're going to set up a forest prosperity fund of \$150 million over three years, invest \$28 million to maintain primary forest access roads to help reduce costs to the forestry sector, upload the cost of the forestry inventory studies which had previously been downloaded by the past government at an estimated cost of about \$10 million a year and establish an additional \$1 million per year with the Ontario wood promotion program to ensure that there's proper marketing and that we're promoting our Ontario products here in the province. That's the feedback that I'm getting from local forestry representatives in Sault Ste. Marie: from Boniferno Mill Works, St. Marys Paper and Flakeboard Ltd., another company that has had tremendous success in our community.

I certainly have to give credit to Minister Ramsay for working very hard with the Premier on behalf of the people of Ontario and on behalf of the forestry sector to ensure that the forestry incentive package was delivered for northern Ontario industries. I also want to give credit to Minister Bartolucci, who has spent a great deal of time advocating for northern Ontario industry through the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the NOHFC program: \$15 million toward geoscience mapping to unlock the potential of the far north; \$13 million in a new program called grow bonds that will invest in businesses and the human resources of northern Ontario; \$5 million for the GO North investment program, which is also bringing results to northern Ontario; and the creation of northern development councils so that northerners can once again have a greater say in this Legislature.

I can tell you the experiences in Sault Ste. Marie. The Flakeboard plant expanded in Sault Ste. Marie and, with \$1.5 million through the northern Ontario heritage fund,

built a 45,000-square-foot building, adding another 30 jobs, with an additional expansion through the NOHFC of \$575,000, adding another 15 jobs to this particular business. Unlike the NDP, we are putting the money into the northern Ontario heritage fund. When they were in government, they took \$60 million out of the northern Ontario heritage fund program and put it into general revenues. This is a program that is so vitally important to the economic prosperity and well-being of northerners, and our government understands its value and its validity to northerners and we're going to continue to ensure that the program is there and that it provides the leverage necessary to make businesses in northern Ontario very successful.

I know there are a number of other members who have spoken on behalf of our northern caucus and our northern contingent here at Queen's Park. I understand Mr. Gravelle, the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North, has a number of comments to make and that he has been working very hard with his forestry groups in north-western Ontario. So with that, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

**The Acting Speaker:** The Chair recognizes the member for Oshawa.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** I'll leave that to the member. That's OK.

I know the minister stated that things are changing within the ministry. Once upon a time, if you worked in northern Ontario, it didn't matter if you were in a school or a hospital, if somebody asked you where you were working and you said, "The ministry," they knew you were working at MNR because MNR is probably the greatest ministry in government; right, Minister?

I've got a little bit of experience in this in a number of ways. I ran a cutter-skidder operation for a while, so I've got some hands-on experience with this, along with a number of other aspects as well, which may come out later on.

I want to give a bit of background, because I'm sure the people watching the debate may not fully understand all the complexities, as the minister and others have stated, of what's going on here. First of all, the industry has changed significantly over time. Many people don't realize, for example, that in Hearst over 200 million—that's 200 million—trees have been replanted there. Most people don't even know that the first 15 years of a tree's life are the most carbon-converting years because they're growing like kids, they're growing like weeds; they're competing with each other and they're fighting for carbon and converting that into oxygen for us, which is what people don't realize. It's sometimes good to get those understandings.

Clear-cutting: Some companies—for example, there is an operator currently operating just outside of Chapleau right now who will go in and clear-cut an area. He'll be able to go in and cut every 60-year-old poplar out of that forest, and then a year from now you would never know a cut had taken place. With the new technologies, they can go in, as wide as these two desks, pick a specific tree,

put a clamp on that tree and tell you exactly how many board feet are in that tree just by clamping around it. That's the computer technology that's going on. Those are things that people in most parts of southern Ontario don't really understand.

There are a lot of other things taking place. As a matter of fact, during the past week I happened to tour a cut area in the north. It was a hardwood cut, but I was quite surprised that they planted Jack pine in the area, and there was some white spruce and black spruce in there as well. It kind of surprised me, why they'd do that.

In Ontario, for moose management—in Alberta, for example, they've changed their policy and gone for caribou management. What that means is that you'll cut in pockets to promote short-term growth, quick growth, that will allow for moose development. Whereas in Alberta, they'll do large cuts, as the gentlemen here will know, and they don't touch that area again for 60 years because caribou need that long lifespan to allow the mosses and lichens that they feed on to grow in that area.

Some of the things taking place in this whole industry are very significant, and people need to realize that. From a southern Ontario perspective, it's difficult to explain, but when you're in, say, Chapleau, or a small community like that, or as the gentlemen here are predominantly from Kenora—300 jobs in my community, in Oshawa, and what did they do? They opened a new strip mall. But no, it's a significant component of the employment factor in the north. The forest industry and the mining industry are the lifeblood of the north, and we need to focus on that to keep those things going.

I know there are some problems with skilled trades, which all governments tried to work on, to make sure these people had the opportunity. What's taking place, though—I'll start off with a quote: "So long as the forest has value, it will continue to be a forest." What that means, for example, is that if Chapleau, Foleyet, Dubreuilville or any of the other small communities shut down their mills, guess what? The council isn't looking to the forest industry for support. They're going to look at other aspects of utilization of that product. Maybe it's the farming industry. Maybe they want to do cattle grazing in those areas. "So long as the forest has value, it will continue to be a forest." We need to make sure that forests grow in the province of Ontario so Ontario can prosper and the north can prosper, and everybody else can gain from that benefit. Whether it's because of hurricanes and other disasters taking place, we can all certainly help out throughout North America and benefit from the forest industry.

But one of the things taking place is that now, all of a sudden, the community in Chapleau or Foleyet, for example, will be saying, "We don't have anybody who works in the forest industry. Why would we support the forest industry?" And as those supermills are created in places like Timmins and Sault Ste. Marie, or whether it's Kenora, Dryden or Thunder Bay, those will be the key areas where those will be focused on and everybody else will be posturing to use that forest land for other reasons.



The forest will no longer have value to them and they will find other reasons for that. That's going to have a significant impact on all the communities around.

Some of the other things: There was one forester, and he was a good provider. I don't know if you gentlemen know that there was one forest mill sawing white pine—it was a slicer mill—and he had housing to house his people. He used to hire the husband and the wife, and it was a great community. For 50 years his business ran, but because of the current labour policy changes by the government, as well as the environmental changes that have taken place, guess what? He said, "It's not worth my while to do it any more." So he shut down and he's going to buy it from somewhere else. There were essentially 46 jobs at one point in Chapleau that are gone because of policy changes that are coming forward.

These are the sorts of things that people in southern Ontario need to realize significantly impact the north. That many jobs have a huge impact in a community the size of Chapleau, let alone all the other spinoff jobs. It's not just the mill. It's the ones who drive to the mill, it's the cutters in the bush, it's the suppliers that supply all these goods. It's a huge impact on a northern community, and people don't realize that.

1710

Some of the other things that are taking place: We focused on energy pricing. I was in one mill where they were doing a \$50-million upgrade in their plant. You know something? When the spot market hit, they had to have a two-hour notice to get on to sell in the spot market; they were gauging and trying to get changes in because they made more money selling energy in the spot market to New York state than they made producing paper. They were deciding, "Are we in the paper business or are we in the energy-producing business?" because there was more money on one side. The impact there is not only on the people working in the mills, like I said, it's the drivers and the cutters in the bush being impacted by things like that. Those are the things that need to be addressed.

There are a lot of other things that take place. I'm not sure if there are any cutters here who use, for example, the Martin guidelines. The Martin guidelines are interpreted by each separate district office in a different way. I know for a fact that the previous minister established a forestry committee that didn't include the government. They only had one seat on it, and all the rest was up to the industry to make sure there was consistency in the guideline interpretations so that all the cuts could be the same by the same company across the province. That way, the Martin interpretation or stick nest interpretations—and for those who are watching, stick nest is basically where, if you see an osprey nest, you report it to the ministry, they identify the species, and then they have a 10-acre parameter around it to protect that nest, which is great. But with the new technologies, I've seen where they took a photo, did a satellite send-off right into Chapleau, got it identified and were cutting that same morning in that same area with no problems in the stick

nest. That's an indication of the industry's ability to change, to go in and identify specific fibre out there, as well as the amount of board feet, clear-cut that area, and then next year you don't even know it's done, as well as taking care of nature. Some of the things the ministry could be doing would have a big impact.

On to some of the very specific things that have arisen today. I know for a fact, because I know the previous minister heard it from the senior bureaucracy, that—guess what?—there are too many players out there, and if we had 50% fewer forest mills out there, we'd have 50% fewer problems. Here is the perfect example. I'm going to read to you a comment from the Sault Star on February 16. It specifically says, "Bill Thornton"—I would hope Bill Thornton is a name that the government members would recognize, because I think he's acting director in charge of forestry right now. "Bill Thornton, director of corporate relations with the Ministry of Natural Resources, had an equally blunt assessment.

"It has been a long time since the sector has experienced changes as profound as what will take place this year," he said. "This is the starting point of industry restructuring." Remember what I said about the senior bureaucracy stating that if there were 50% fewer players, we'd have 50% fewer problems? "There will be fewer, but greater capacity mills, with fewer employees to operate them. There's a tough road ahead but it cannot be ignored."

Part of the problem was that they had to get out and, unfortunately, some of the geo-mapping stuff, as mentioned before by I think the member from Sault Ste. Marie, along with a number of others, as well as the minister—what they used to do was cruise forests. You look at that map and tell me—and I'll defy anybody in here on the floor, or maybe over there it would be different, to look and see if it's a birch or that strain of poplar that's all white and looks like a birch when you drive by. You can't tell what that fibre is by looking at a map from an aerial survey. You need people on the ground in the bush to tell what that fibre is. Quite frankly, there are a lot of mills that can operate up to about 15% birch fibre and the remaining content of poplar. But guess what? When you look at it there, it's all birch, but when you get there, it's all poplar. That's because there are problems within the ministry that they're trying to work out. The details aren't there, and it's going to have a significant impact.

There are other impacts within this industry that need to be addressed as well. Of course, there's the value of the dollar. When the dollar is high, fibre isn't as attractive to sell to the American states, so the demand drops as well. Not only that, there's the gas price. The previous minister had the opportunity to sit down with all the ministers from across Canada, and the federal government came out with a great plan. They were going to put farmland—and if you look at Logging and Sawmilling Journal, I think it's Alberta. What the feds have done now is that they've come in and they're planting vacant farmland to grow trees. I asked, and I know the previous

minister asked, very specifically of the federal government, "Isn't that an advantage to a company that's located close to those farms?" They said, "What do you mean?" I said, "The cost to ship them is so close that it's not competitively advantaged," and they never even considered the fact they were going to give certain companies advantages because of the shipping costs to take that fibre to the local mill when they plant right beside it on crown land and public lands. They were going to subsidize them, and if you read that, you'll see.

What's taking place in Alberta now is that there are going to be significant players who are going to get a benefit, because the growth of that fibre, when it comes time to harvest, is closer to the mills, and other mills will not receive the same benefit. They didn't work that out, and I'm not sure what's taking place in Ontario, but I certainly hope to hear from some of the government members on that.

Also, we talked about gas prices. We talked about some of the other costs, the value of the dollar and electricity. Electricity is one of the key problems with that whole sector, obviously, and we need to find a way to make sure that the individuals who are working in that industry are working in the best interests of the province and, more importantly, of northern Ontario, because, like I said before, the forest industry and the mining industry are the lifeblood of the north, and they continue to need to do so.

I know we have two other members who wish to speak, so I'll give up my time now.

**Mr. Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** I'm very glad to join this debate as well. As I think all members have recognized, this is a very important debate. It's about an issue that has a huge impact on thousands upon thousands of people in northern Ontario and many thousands as well in southern Ontario.

I don't have a lot of time left, and I have a lot of things I'd like to talk about. What I might want to begin with is how startled I was by the approach taken by the leader of the third party. Certainly, I know the member well. He's obviously a member from northern Ontario as well and I'm sure he cares about his riding, hopefully as much as I do and many other northern members do—I'm sure he does. But the approach he took bothered me from the point of view that he essentially spoke on the basis that these operations are all closing down. In fact, he even made reference to an operation that has not yet closed down, and spoke in those terms, which bothered me. What's very clear is that our approach should be one of, "How do we deal with this crisis?" It's recognized by all of us that indeed we have a crisis. We've had a tremendous amount of pressure put on our government, as well we should, and I like to believe they've responded in a very good fashion. But I've got to tell you, it bothered me very much.

I represent Thunder Bay-Superior North. Most people know that. That means I represent the people of Red Rock, where there's obviously a situation at Norampac. I also happen to know what they're trying to do at

Norampac, which is to find a way to keep the operation going. I've spoken to the senior management there and we're working very closely with them to try and keep the operation going. When they made the decision to curtail their operation, to lose those jobs, which was devastating on its own, they made it clear all by themselves that they wanted to keep the rest of the operation going. They were looking for help from our government, and we hope to provide that. That's why I don't think an attitude of "This is the end of the day and it's going to go down" is one they want to hear.

I can say the same thing about Cascades. I've spoken to senior management at Cascades and they are not planning to close down. Listen, we all understand that there are some real challenges—and that's the polite word—to face. Many of us in the House have used the term "perfect storm" more than once, and it's quite true. There's no doubt that the price of electricity is one of those challenges, but we also know there are many others as well. Certainly, when they made the announcement of the decision at Cascades, they were very clear about energy costs being a factor, and the fact that the dollar had gone up to above 85 cents and what a huge difference that made.

The fact is, you're absolutely right to expect the government of the day to respond. We do have a number of government members from northern Ontario and we've all been working extremely hard to make sure that we get a package out there.

I won't stand here and tell you that I think it's actually enough. I would like to see more, and I'm going to continue to lobby. My colleague the minister would expect me to continue to lobby. I want to see help on the energy prices as well. But I can tell you that I know how hard he has worked. I certainly know how hard I and my colleagues have worked to make sure that we come out there with a package that's going to have some value. I can tell you—and I think you know this too. I guess the odd thing about what I'm saying is, to some degree I'm irritated because I'm hearing what the opposition is saying. I did spend years in opposition, as you know, and I understand how it's done. But the fact is, I still think the obligation that we all have is to try to find a way to work together to make sure we find solutions to a real problem; not determine that it's over, not determine that this is the end of the day, as I think was the approach the leader of the third party was taking. That's what I heard him say, and it bothered me.

The fact is, we have to continue to work as hard as we can to come up with—but you know, talking about finessing the issue bothered me as well. Regardless of whether or not you like the package that's out there, it's a \$680-million package: \$350 million in loan guarantees and \$330 million in some very important incentives to the industry. I know for sure it's going to make a difference. I've already spoken to enough industry leaders to know it will make a difference.



1720

I am certainly looking forward and waiting for the federal government to respond. My colleague the federal member for Thunder Bay–Superior North agreed that should be the case. I think it's very important we have a federal response. The federal government, I believe, put together a package recently with the province of Quebec, and we need that to happen. The fact is that we need the help of everyone, which includes members of the opposition in the House, to recognize that indeed it's not a simple solution. There are incredible changes going on in the industry, and we need to be sure that we all work together on this.

That's the part that bothered me the most when I heard the member for Kenora–Rainy River speaking at the beginning of this debate. It's not over, folks. We've got a lot of work to do, there are some real challenges ahead, and we're going to keep working to make that happen.

It somewhat sticks in my craw too that the fact is that you did download responsibility for forest road maintenance.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gravelle:** Yes, you did download it. The minister read the letter from Bud Wildman. There was some assistance from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. It just bothers me when I hear that. You did decide not to go ahead with the Conawapa falls project in the 1990s, which has had a huge impact on the future of energy generation. There's no question about it. Perhaps it is simple, and I appreciate the fact that we have to have, and must have, this kind of debate.

One of the best things about it from the perspective of the northern members is—I've been speaking about this issue in caucus on a continual basis, as have all my northern colleagues, and I'm very grateful, may I say, to the Premier for his direct involvement in this issue. Absolutely, I think it's important. He's very concerned about this. As to those who so blithely say we don't care about the north or the northwest, it really bothers me because I know how hard I have worked on it, how hard my colleague Bill Mauro has worked on it, how hard the ministers have, their northern colleagues and the Premier. The fact is, sure, there's more to come and I want there to be more, but I think part of that has got to come from the federal government.

I will continue to do my part to battle on behalf of my constituents. I represent people in Marathon. I know how people in Marathon are feeling right now. They're worried; they're nervous. I know what's going on in Terrace Bay and Schreiber. I understand the challenges. But it's an interesting thing even with the situation at Neenah Paper. Energy is actually 8% of their costs, as you would probably know.

Before I lose my time, even specifically responding to the resolution, the member for Timmins–James Bay himself said, when he was asked about giving energy rates for the northern industry, "I don't know how that'll ever fly." I saw you on TV talking about how you couldn't see how that would ever work because the rest of industry

would want it. That's what you said on TV, and I thought that was an interesting thing to hear you say.

The fact is that we've all got to keep working on this together, keep challenging our colleagues. I'm going to keep doing that. That's my job. I'm grateful for all the support I'm receiving on this side of the House, and I'd sure like to see that kind of support from that side of the House as well.

**Ms. Scott:** It's a pleasure today to rise to speak on the motion brought forward by the member from Kenora–Rainy River "that in the opinion of this House, the McGuinty government must recognize that during the first two years of its mandate, thousands of jobs have been lost in the forest industries of northern Ontario; and

"Recognize that communities are being devastated by the loss of jobs and the disintegration of local and regional economies...."

From the United Steelworkers, many of whom are in the gallery today watching this, the Kenora mill closure is set for October 23, wiping out this community. The government has got to listen.

Timmins city council had a special meeting and passed a resolution acknowledging the devastating impact this is having in their community.

The forestry sector "generates \$19 billion in annual sales, employs ... 275,000 people, pays direct salaries of \$4.8 billion...." They're responding to what the government announced. It's "a baby step in the right direction," said Councillor Gary Scripnick. "The \$28 million for primary road maintenance (announced by the province) does not even cover the recent escalation of fuel cost, and the biggest issue that the forest industry wanted tackled is a supply of affordable electricity. That wasn't even addressed."

In my own community, Haliburton county—a beautiful spot of the world, if you haven't been there—tourism and forestry are neck and neck as the number one economic industry in Haliburton county. I've had several industries go under there. I've had some survive. It's tough. We have a large employer, Hunter sawmills in Gooderham, which employs about 60 people, but I've had Ontario Hardwood Veneers go under.

We have planing mills, wood components—loggers are having a tough time just with the price of fuel and insurance, but the eastern part of Haliburton county alone needs this industry. It's essential. We're all under attack here, rural and northern Ontario.

The member from Thunder Bay–Superior North mentioned that the federal government has to participate. We notice that the feds gave \$50 million to the Quebec forestry industry and we're hoping that they do the same for Ontario.

Tembec has sent out a press release that says, "Assistance to industry should come in the form of loan guarantees from the EDC (Export Development Canada). They will recognize our duty deposits as accounts receivable and provide loan guarantees to companies that wish to use them. Since we will eventually get these deposits back, the government has virtually no risk."

James Wallace has written in to the Peterborough Examiner. "Northern mayors, councillors, forest industry managers, union officials and, in a report that has now been collecting dust since May ... the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness are saying the same thing."

Warnings of the possibility "of the 2,200 direct jobs ... 8,900 indirect jobs.... The federal government would lose \$160 million in tax revenue, Ontario \$100 million and local municipalities \$22 million....

"After the auto sector, forestry is the single largest contributor to the provincial balance of trade."

It's devastating. The government has to do something soon. They asked for the Minister's Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness since May—and I repeat, since May. It should be noted that it's in the last two years, similar to the time period since this present Liberal government has been elected, that the industry profits have languished. Just since December 2004, there have been mill closures announced at two pulp and paper mills, one veneer mill, one particle board mill, four sawmills in Ontario, and one company has stated its intent to sell a paper mill.

In the report, the delivered wood costs: to bring delivered wood costs in Ontario into line with the global average; roads and hauling costs; regulatory issues related to harvesting, transportation and efficient distribution of wood and wood products. In the past several years, the forestry industry has been bearing the full costs of building and maintaining access roads and bridges on Ontario crown lands, but many of these roads are public access roads used by tourists, campers, hunters, and other industries like hydro, mining and other issues.

The recommendation: that the provincial government assume its proportional share of the costs of building and maintaining the public access roads network on provincial crown forests and that "proportional" be defined as 100% of primary road costs and 50% of secondary road costs.

I know I need to share my time, Mr. Speaker.

The date on this is February 23, 2005. "The Ontario government announced its intention to appoint a facilitator to work with industrial companies to explore cogeneration opportunities in the province." I don't know if I've missed it or not, but I don't think that has ever happened: Has there been a commissioner appointed for cogeneration? Are we not talking about the costs of energy, the survivability of northern Ontario? They said in February of this year that they would appoint a cogeneration commissioner and it has not been done. The member said he wants all parties to work together and the government to do something for northern Ontario. There's one thing they said they would do in February and it hasn't been done.

I want to end with a quote from Jamie Lim, the president of the Ontario Forest Industry Association: "With more mills and more jobs on the very cusp of being lost, we cannot urge our government strongly enough to act decisively." Here's your chance. Act decisively.

**Mr. Chudleigh:** I just want to remind the House that today is October 20. On October 20, the Minister of Natural Resources stood in his place today and said he's willing to turn the lights off on Ontario's infrastructure. I don't think I've ever remembered a day when a minister stood in this House and said that infrastructure in Ontario was disposable. I'm particularly disappointed that this minister would say that, because this minister got into politics because he was developing infrastructure in the New Liskeard area of the clay belt. He full well knows how important infrastructure is to small towns, to large cities, to Ontario's economy in general, and yet today we are talking that there is some infrastructure, there are some pulp and paper mills in Ontario, which is not going to survive. Minister, that's really not good enough.

We've got to find a way to make every one of those mills survive, to make Ontario the place where pulp and paper comes from, to make Ontario the competitive jurisdiction that we were at one time and should be again. It's going to take a lot of work, but even one of those mills is too many to let go. Because you know, more than most people over there, that infrastructure is extremely difficult to get back once it's gone. To stand in your place and say, "Infrastructure, pulp and paper mills: We may not have as many in Ontario tomorrow as we have today," is really unacceptable. I think that everyone in this House has expressed today, through this motion, that they would be willing to stand up and work as one unit to make sure to do whatever is necessary to save those mills and to make them competitive and to find the markets to sell that newsprint. We're living beside the largest consumer of newsprint in the world. Surely we can find a way to sell that newsprint to that newsprint-hungry nation south of us. To stand here and say that it is expendable is just not acceptable in the Ontario that I know. It took too long to build that infrastructure and we should not let it go. We should not let it go over an issue like this.

1730

**Mr. Bisson:** So little time and so much to say, so I'll try to do it as best I can in the 13 minutes I've got. I want members of this assembly, especially government members, to understand something and get this clear. This is not just a northern Ontario issue. This is not just northern Ontario that's going to suffer as a result of what's going on in the forestry industry as a result of government policy. It's going to affect not just the northern economy but the economy across this province. My colleague Andrea Horwath, the member from Hamilton East, who is our industry trade critic, pointed out correctly that if the industry goes down in northern Ontario, the industry in southern Ontario will go the same way because many mills are situated in southern Ontario as well. They're not just in the north, number one. Number two, most of the servicing as far as technical support, engineering support and manufacturing of equipment that allows these mills to operate, the chemicals they use, the glue they use, everything they use to operate this industry, is produced in southern Ontario.



People need to understand that if northern Ontario goes down as a result of what happens in the forest industry, southern Ontario is going to go with it. We're talking about 275,000 jobs in this province. It's real, serious stuff, and for the government to say, "This is cyclical; this is not the fault of a provincial government; this is what's happening in the United States and everywhere else," really misses the point. If you talk to industry, they're very clear. Industry is saying it's not cyclical. This issue is one that can be solved by the provincial government's moving on a number of fronts, and I'm going to talk about those later. I want to make it very, very clear on the front end of this debate that this is not just a northern Ontario issue. Yes, we're going to suffer the greatest, but southern Ontario is going to be right behind us. I say to this government, shame on you for not responding to what I think is a crisis in this province, not just in northern Ontario.

I also want to say that people need to understand, as we go into this debate, that this is the second-largest employer in Ontario, the second-largest industry. We collect almost \$1 billion of revenue in this province as a result of the activities in the forest industry by municipal governments and by the provincial and federal governments. The employment levels, as I said, were 275,000 overall when you look at the entire industry and the industry that supports it. I want to propose this: This is the second-largest employer in Ontario. Imagine, if you will, that if the auto plants along Highway 401 from Windsor out to Oshawa were to face a similar crisis, what this government and every government would do. It would wake up, it would hear the alarm bells and it would do something in order to avert the disaster that would ensue in the communities from Windsor to Oshawa and everybody in between. I ask myself as an Ontarian, "Why is our government not responding to what is a serious issue in the forest industry when it's so important to this province?" I say to you, if we're able to do it for the auto sector, we should be able to do it for the forestry sector as well.

This government's response has been, "We fixed the problem, don't worry. We've still got programs; there will be adjustments. But we've put forward this aid package in order to assist industry." Let me tell you this: Imagine, if you will, that you're in debt over your ears and your Visa card is out to the max. The banker says, "I'll fix your problem: I'll give you a MasterCard." How does that fix your problem? It's just going to throw you back in debt, and eventually you're going to go under.

The second issue is that whatever money the industry would get from the province may stave it off for six months, a year, two years, but the problem is the associated cost of running industry in Ontario as a result of forestry policy and energy policy. If you want, Minister, you can throw a billion dollars at industry. That's not what they want. The issue is, you have to go after the root, fundamental causes of the problem in industry, and the biggest part of that has to do with electricity, energy generally, and also forestry fibre costs.

I want to say to the government, the minister stood here and said, "We announced last year some \$300 million, \$350 million as an aid to the industry so that we can allow them to lever money to modernize themselves, and we've announced another \$50 million a year over the next three years"—\$150 million—"in order to assist industry."

First of all, they're matching funds. Industry has to go and get the capital themselves to match it. But here's the problem: The government says, "You're going to be able to do things like invest in new technology so that you can become more efficient and state-of-the-art." They are state-of-the-art. This industry is not the industry of 60 years ago; it's an industry that has invested in itself over and over again to make itself cutting edge. This is a cutting-edge industry. Walk into a paper mill in Kapuskasing, in Kenora, in Sault Ste. Marie. Walk into a saw-mill. You'll be astounded at the technology you'll find in them. They're the best workforces in the world. The Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union that is here today, along with the Steelworkers—both of those unions represent the vast majority of the unionized workers—represent the most effective workforce in industry.

Let me give you an example: The overall cost of paper production is 15% labour. If the issue was "These guys are getting too much money," industry wouldn't—there's no argument. It's 15% of the overall cost. The big cost for industry is electricity energy prices and fibre costs.

I want to come back to the point I wanted to make about the package the government has put forward. Industry has told me, in talking to Jamie Lim at the OFIA and talking to people at Tembec, Domtar, Grant and others, "Listen: If the issue was as simple as us investing in ourselves and modernizing our technology, as the government says, we've done it. That's not an issue. If the simple solution is for us to invest in cogeneration plants, we would have done it." They didn't need the government to tell them they can invest in a cogeneration plant.

Here's the basic problem: If you take a look at your energy policy, if you went out and built a cogeneration plant, your base rate for electricity would be higher with a cogeneration plant than it is off the grid today. If you look at the cost of producing electricity from cogeneration, it's about 12 to 13, 14 cents per kilowatt hour. They pay less than that on the grid as it is now.

The basic issue is this—and I want to take exception to something that my good colleague, the former member for Renfrew, Mr. Conway, said on TVO. He said, "You've got to understand that Ontario is in a pool price of electricity." What hogwash. Here's how it works: If you can have 1,000 office buildings in downtown Toronto all turn on the lights and air-conditioners at the same time, they will pay the same price for electricity if they burn one kilowatt or if they burn 10,000 kilowatts. But where we are, because of the type of industry we're in, as the demand for electricity in Ontario goes up, what ends up happening is our industry has to pay what's called peak power prices in order to purchase electricity. So the

base price is about 8.5 cents per kilowatt hour, roughly. How much was it in Kapuskasing, Bob, just about two days ago—2,000 megawatts?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Bisson:** Two thousand bucks per megawatt is what we had to pay because the demand load for electricity within the province was so high that the price that Tembec had to pay in Kapuskasing to get that electricity was \$2,000 per megawatt hour. So there is no pool price. In northern Ontario, those industries that use electricity to the degree that the pulp and paper industry uses it, and I would argue mining as well, are burdened with costs because they have to pay peak power prices. Southern Ontario doesn't have to do that, by and large.

1740

I met with the auto sector here the other day when they had the reception. Electricity is just a mere mention in their balance sheet when it comes to costs. They don't have to deal with these issues; our industry does. This government needs to recognize that there is no pool price in this province. We need to take a look at how we're able to give northern industry an ability to reduce those electricity costs, because if we don't, at the end of the day, we're going to go under.

I want to go to the government, your electricity policy is the root cause of the problem. Go talk to Terry Skiffington in Kapuskasing; go talk to the mill manager at Abitibi in Iroquois Falls, whose name I forget offhand; go talk to Jamie Lim; go talk to any of them in industry. Don't listen to me as a New Democrat; don't listen to Cec Makowski; don't listen to Norm Rivard from CAW and CEP—whoa, CAW? I mean, CEP and the Steelworkers. God forbid. I didn't say that. Go and talk to industry; industry is going to tell you that the base cost of doing business in Ontario has gone through the roof and a big part of it is electricity costs.

I want to go to the fibre issue. I only have about four minutes left. I want to explain this to members. I want to put this in a very basic way. I was at a press conference this morning, along with my friends from Kenora and Kapuskasing who were here, both Steelworkers and CEP. Sean Mallen from Global asked a question. I think it was a very good question. He said, "Industry is saying that they want government to pay for the roads that we use to haul the trees from the forest into the mills. Why should we do that? It's a lot of money." Who the heck pays for the road for the auto plant in Windsor to ship its products to and fro on Highway 401? The entire auto sector is subsidized when it comes to transportation, along with every other industry in the province. When it comes to transportation, the province picks up the entire cost, because we pay the price of building the roads. Industry is saying that they need the government to re-upload to themselves the costs of roads.

The parliamentary assistant said, "That was you that did that." No, go look at the estimates binders: 1989 is when this started. We are the government that reinvested back into roads—maybe not to the degree that we had to, but the issues were different then. Electricity prices

weren't what we're paying today. What this government needs to recognize is that when industry says, "We need help," if you don't deal with those issues, they're not going to be standing two and three years down the road—and I would argue even before that.

I say to the government: You need to understand that the trees are farther into the forest. We are sustaining our forests in a very good way. We've cut the trees that are closer to the mills; those are being regenerated, but they're not ready to cut, they're not mature forests yet. So those mills across northern Ontario and other places are having to go farther and farther into the forest to haul the fibre back to the mill. The cost of transportation is killing them, both because of road construction costs and also fuel costs. The government needs to recognize that it has to take that responsibility. The government said, "We did that. We spent \$28 million as a program in order to re-upload the roads back to the province." Well, that's a drop in the bucket. The reality is that it's a larger cost than that. So when the government stands in this House and says to me as a New Democrat, as a northerner, as a steelworker, as a person who worked in the industry—listen, it is not cyclical; it's not a question of what's happening with the global economy; it's a question of what's happening here in Ontario.

The last point I have in the last couple of minutes, and I want to talk directly to industry and to the OFA, is this: Don't be suckered by this government. This government is trying to say to industry, "Stick with us. We'll be fine. Wait until next spring's budget. You're going to see something good in next year's budget to help us." Listen, I've been around this place long enough to know what that song is all about. Industry has to decide if it wants to survive, because if industry does not, in my opinion, come together and put pressure on this government to take action now, first of all, by this spring there won't be very many of them left. We already know how many of them are going down just next weekend.

The issue is, what happens if government doesn't respond—and I don't believe they will—in the spring budget? You are then looking at another complete cycle of the budget where the government is basically going to say, "Don't worry. Vote for us in the next election, and we'll fix it next term." You can't get suckered by that.

At the end of the day, industry has to say, "Are we prepared to go the entire way? Are we prepared to basically put pressure on this government?" I'm not saying we have to be mean and nasty, but we have to put pressure on this government at the end of the day so that they move on the key issues, which are the cost issues of being able to do business in northern Ontario when it comes to forestry.

I also want to say this to the minister: You know that today we have the workers from the Kenora mill and the workers from the Tembec mill. They're here for a reason.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Bisson:** We should applaud them. We have with us Cec Makowski, who is a vice-president for the Ontario region of CEP; and we have Norm Rivard, who is a vice-



president of the Steelworkers wood council within the Steelworkers organization.

I want to say, these people have come from a long way for a reason. You don't see these guys down in Toronto every day; you see them every now and then. Quite frankly, the last time was probably in the early 1990s. They're here to bring you a message: This government has to take responsibility and has got to deal with the root costs of doing business in northern Ontario when it comes to this industry. You must deal with hydro-electricity prices, and you must deal with fibre prices. If you don't do those things, we're not going to be standing at the end, and then they'll be coming for you in the next election. That's the problem you're going to have.

**The Acting Speaker:** Mr. Hampton has moved opposition day motion number 1. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1745 to 1755.*

**The Acting Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

#### Ayes

Amott, Ted	Horwath, Andrea	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Chudleigh, Ted	Marchese, Rosario	Scott, Laurie
Hampton, Howard	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John

**The Acting Speaker:** All those opposed to the motion will please rise.

#### Nays

Arthurs, Wayne	Gravelle, Michael	Ramsay, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Rinaldi, Lou
Bradley, James J.	Kular, Kuldip	Ruprecht, Tony
Brownell, Jim	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Bryant, Michael	Levac, Dave	Smith, Monique
Canfield, Donna H.	Marsales, Judy	Smitherman, George
Caplan, David	Mossop, Jennifer F.	Sorbara, Gregory S.
Craiton, Kim	Oraziotti, David	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	Peters, Steve	Van Bommel, Maria
Dombrowsky, Leona	Peterson, Tim	Wilkinson, John
Duguid, Brad	Phillips, Gerry	Wong, Tony C.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Qaadri, Shafiq	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gerretsen, John	Racco, Mario G.	Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 12; the nays are 39.

**The Acting Speaker:** I declare the motion lost.

It being past 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 1:30 on Monday afternoon next.

*The House adjourned at 1758.*

# CONTENTS

Thursday 20 October 2005

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### Foodland Ontario

Mrs. Wynne.....	227, 234
Mr. Barrett .....	228
Mrs. Mitchell .....	230
Ms. Scott.....	230
Mr. Leal .....	231
Ms. Churley .....	231
Mr. Klees .....	233
Ms. Mossop .....	233
Mrs. Van Bommel .....	234
Agreed to .....	243

### Crime prevention

Mr. Qaadri .....	235, 242
Mr. Dunlop .....	236
Mr. Duguid .....	238
Ms. Churley .....	239
Ms. Wynne.....	241
Mr. Wong.....	242
Agreed to .....	243

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Waste Reduction Week

Ms. Scott.....	243
----------------	-----

### Support for South Asian community

Mr. Brownell .....	244
--------------------	-----

### Long-term care

Mr. Runciman.....	244
-------------------	-----

### Transportation

Mr. Zimmer .....	244
------------------	-----

### Hospital funding

Mr. Wilson.....	245
-----------------	-----

### Education

Ms. Smith.....	245
----------------	-----

### Electricity supply

Mrs. Mitchell .....	245
---------------------	-----

### Industrie forestière

M. Bisson.....	245
----------------	-----

### Growth planning

Mr. Levac.....	246
----------------	-----

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### Daylight saving time

Mr. Bryant .....	246
Mr. Runciman.....	248

### School bus safety

Mr. Takhar .....	247
Mr. Bisson .....	249

### Hydro rebates

Ms. Cansfield.....	248
Mr. Yakabuski .....	249
Mr. Hampton .....	249

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Minister's expenses

Mr. Runciman .....	250
Mr. McGuinty .....	250, 251
Mr. Yakabuski.....	250

### Infectious disease control

Mr. Hampton .....	251
Mr. Smitherman .....	251

### Crime prevention

Mr. Dunlop.....	253
Mr. Bryant .....	253

### Federal-provincial fiscal policies

Mr. Prue .....	254
Mr. McGuinty .....	254

### Immigrants' skills

Mr. Ruprecht .....	254
Mr. Colle .....	255

### Hospital funding

Mrs. Witmer .....	255
Mr. Smitherman .....	255

### Forest industry

Mr. Hampton .....	256
Mr. Ramsay.....	256, 257
Mr. Miller.....	257

### Contaminated property

Mr. Lalonde.....	256
Mr. Ramsay.....	257

### Steel industry

Ms. Horwath.....	258
Mr. Cordiano.....	258

### School bus safety

Mrs. Van Bommel.....	258
Mr. Takhar .....	259

### Tourism

Mr. Arnott .....	259
Mr. Bradley .....	259

## PETITIONS

### Cancer treatment

Mr. Jackson .....	259
-------------------	-----

### Driver penalties

Mr. Prue .....	260
----------------	-----

### Health services

Mr. Berardinetti.....	260
-----------------------	-----

### Adoption disclosure

Mr. Sterling .....	260
--------------------	-----

### Disabled persons

<b>parking permit program</b>	
Mr. Prue .....	260

### Gasoline prices

Mr. Ouellette .....	261
---------------------	-----

### Municipal restructuring

Mr. Prue .....	261
Ms. Horwath.....	262

### Long-term care

Mr. Ruprecht .....	261
--------------------	-----

## Tuition

Mrs. Munro.....	261
-----------------	-----

## Affordable housing

Mr. Berardinetti .....	262
------------------------	-----

## Leslie M. Frost centre

Ms. Scott.....	262
----------------	-----

## OPPOSITION DAY

### Forest industry, opposition day number 1, *Mr. Hampton*

Mr. Hampton .....	262
Mr. Ramsay .....	266
Mr. Miller .....	268
Ms. Smith.....	270
Mr. Yakabuski .....	271
Ms. Horwath .....	273
Mr. Oraziotti .....	274
Mr. Ouellette.....	276
Mr. Gravelle.....	278
Ms. Scott.....	279
Mr. Chudleigh.....	280
Mr. Bisson.....	280
Negatived.....	283

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Visitors

The Speaker .....	246
Mr. Kormos .....	246
Mr. Dunlop .....	246
Mr. Wilson.....	246
Mr. Qaadri .....	246

### Business of the House

Mr. Bradley.....	262
------------------	-----

## TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Jeudi 20 octobre 2005

## DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Industrie forestière

M. Bisson.....	245
----------------	-----













